

STUDIES IN  
THE  
PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATION

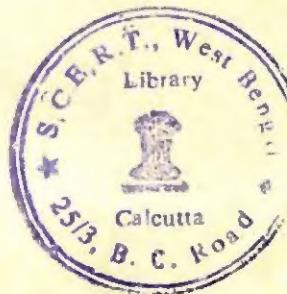
V. P. VARMA



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# STUDIES IN THE PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATION

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Preface

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This book is a collection of my papers bearing on philosophies and problems of education, written between October 1953 and October 1960. I have been reflecting on problems of education since 1944 when I first became a Lecturer in History. My first paper on educational philosophy written at my father's request was read at the Annual Conference of the Educational Officers and Head Masters of the District of Champaran in March 1945. This paper was later printed in the *Vedavani*. Since it was in Hindi, it has not been published in this book. Being a teacher of political philosophy I have been vitally interested in what some of the leading political thinkers have to say about education. I have also become interested in some of the details of education in the process of educating my own children.

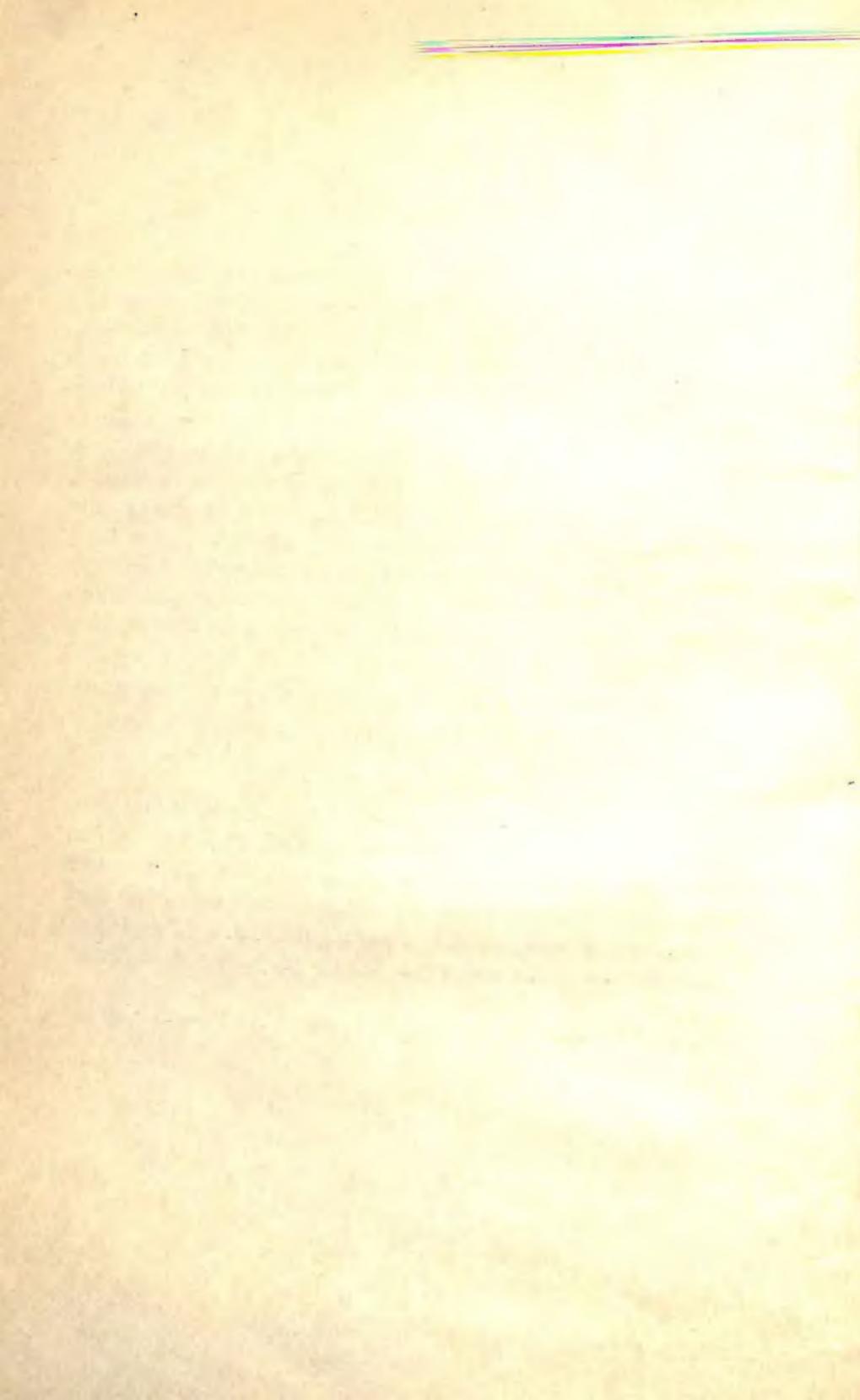
Three papers in political philosophy, although not directly connected with the problem of education, have been included here as Appendices, since they are relevant to some of the points discussed in the main text.

I am deeply thankful to the enterprising publishing firm, Lakshmi Narain Agarwal, Agra, for publishing this book. But for the keenness of Sri Brij Narain Agarwala, it would not have been possible for me to share the results of my researches and thoughts with a wider public. I am thankful to N. K. Agarwal, Rakesh Sinha and Rameshwar Sinha for preparing the Index.

February 12, 1964

VISHWANATH PRASAD VARMA





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**PART ONE**

**PHILOSOPHIES OF EDUCATION**



## *The Role of the Teacher According to the Vedas and the Upanishads*

In ancient India the *acharya* (the preceptor-teacher) had a dignified and exalted status. He commanded the highest respect and reverence not only from his students but from the whole society. No military commander and no powerful imperial potentate could claim moral equality with him. He was at the highest place from the standpoint of social esteem and prestige. He did not own much wealth and did not make important political decisions ; nevertheless, the economic and political leaders paid their homage to the teacher. Perhaps nowhere else in the world was the teacher so highly regarded as in the ancient Hindu cultural tradition. The teacher was the repository of the learning accumulated in those days. He was a person of great moral eminence and in some cases he was credited with having even spiritual perceptions. He was esteemed for the greatness and elevation of his personality and not for the command of material instrumentalities. The great names in Indian culture—Yajnavalkya, Buddha, Sankara, command our respectful homage because they were eminent teachers and intellectual leaders. Lokamanya Tilak used to say that after India obtained political independence he would dedicate himself to teaching mathematics. Mahatma Gandhi, Rabindranath Tagore, Shraddhananda and Malaviya were great teachers. Some of the other notable figures in the history of Indian renaissance and nationalism like Dayananda, Vivekananda, Aurobindo, were thoroughly convinced that national education rooted in the traditions and fundamental moral conceptions of India was the necessary prelude to any real emancipation of the country from the mighty thralldom of an alien civilization. They were reiterating the message of ancient Indian culture that the realization of a man's personality is possible only under the guidance of a great teacher.

Only a man whose body, will, emotions, reason and spirit have been thoroughly developed and chastened under the inspiring leadership of a teacher can become a good citizen and a good man. Hence the place of the teacher is uppermost in the social commonwealth.

### **1. Philosophical Basis of the Status of the Teacher**

The pre-eminent position of the teacher in ancient India was a consequence of the dominantly religious and spiritual characters of the cultural values of the country. Ancient India presented the spectacle of being the most religious country in the world, if we can make such a judgment on the basis of extent literary works and other external embodiments of ideals. Perhaps the only other people who took religion very seriously were the ancient Jews of Palestine. The cultures of China, Persia, Greece and Rome were this-worldly in their fundamental outlook. Inspite of having a great pantheon of deities, Egypt, Babylonia and Assyria do not represent either in their ideals or in their works that serious concern with religion that we find in the Vedic and Upanishadic India. The Vedas enshrine the religious ideals and conceptions of a dominantly theological and mythological age. The teacher was an integral element in the conservation and interpretation of the religious tradition. The Vedic religious ideas are represented in a highly sophisticated and technical language and only the trained teacher could pronounce authoritatively on these matters. The teacher sometimes would act also as the priest.<sup>1</sup> There was not the sharp separation between the teacher and the priest that obtained at a later date. Hence it can be said that one factor that contributed to the pre-eminence of the teacher in Vedic India was the connexion between the art of teaching and the profession of the priest.

During the age of the Upanishads, the spiritual quest became urgent. The keen spirits of that age devoted themselves

<sup>1</sup> Some of the priests mentioned in the Rigveda are Visvamitra, Vasistha and Devapi. Some of the priests of the later Vedic period are उपगु सौश्रवस and देवभांग श्रीतर्प ! In the developed Vedic ritual there were four important priests : (a) ब्रह्मा, (b) होता, (c) अहृवर्यु, and (d) उद्गाता।

to the solution of the great riddle of cosmic origination and human destiny. The burden of life began to assert its compulsiveness and insistent pressure and this resulted in a tremendous concern with the problems of death and redemption. The more sensitive the soul, the more perilous did seem the pilgrimage of life in this forsaken world. The concern with spiritual problems made it essential to seek the guidance of the teacher who had fathomed the deep mysteries of the ocean of life. The teacher was expected to be not a mere debater and dialectician but was the man of spiritual realization who had intimate personal experience of the truths he was inculcating. He taught not merely by precepts and exhortations but by radiating the intense fervour of his own realizations. By austerities, concentration and meditation he was supposed to have obtained an unitive realization of the spiritual truth of all existence and that was the secret of the greatness of his personality. The convincing power of his utterances proceeded not simply from the logical and rational consistency, clarity and distinctness of his arguments but mainly from the added certitude which emanates from the wisdom of the seer and the sage. Hence not only students from different parts of the country but even powerful kings sought the guidance of the teachers and thought it a matter of dignity to appear before the teacher in a humble spirit. According to the Upanishads it was of uttermost importance to gain access to a great teacher because the basic metaphysical truths could not otherwise be learnt. Because in that age, there was a great dissatisfaction with the so-called good things of life (*preya*) and since the supreme gnosis of the *brahman* alone was a matter of significance, hence the teacher as the visible embodiment of divine wisdom came to enjoy moral superiority and people flocked to him to pay grateful reverence and thereby obtain spiritual enlightenment. He (the teacher) not only answered questions of metaphysical doubt and disquiet but was regarded as a leader in conducting the human soul in its onward journey towards spiritual progression. He was the revealer of man's spiritual destiny and fulfilment and hence he had dignity and esteem attached to his position. The *Katha Upanishad* tells us that the supreme truths require for their efficient and proper imparting,

the graceful and benign presence of the teacher who has seen the truth almost face to face.<sup>1</sup>

The knowledge of the supreme spiritual being was regarded as the highest goal of an individual according to the ancient Indian thinkers and seers. But this knowledge was not a function of conceptual consistency and logical perfection. It was consequent upon a disciplined career devoted to moral training. *Tapas* was stressed as the great means for spiritual gnosis. *Tapas* signified both bodily and mental purification. It is inadequate to identify *tapas* solely with bodily austerities and askesis. Penalization of the body was never considered an end in itself. The body was to be perfected into becoming an adequate instrument for attaining the highest knowledge. *Tapas* also included the discipline of the mind. It signified the pursuit of a dedicated life for the realization of some dominant ideals. It was tantamount to the rejection of luxury, laziness and inertia. The element of *tamas* was to be rejected and a superior synthesis of *sattva* and *rajas* was to be realized. According to the ancient Hindu thinkers no great work could be realized without *tapas*. This life of *tapas* could be properly lived only under the guidance of a noble and inspired teacher. According to the ancient Hindu psychology, great ideals could not be realised in life by mere external exhortation. The best way to achieve them was to practise them in one's life and conduct. The life of such a person, of whose personality great ideals had become integral constituents, was the sufficient vindication of their veracity. It was essential that in immature years the student should not be subjected to moral doubts and scepticism. He was to imbibe the great ideals and to make them parts of his life and this could be possible only if he lived under the superintendence of a teacher. Hence the latter was not merely to transmit some external mass of factual information but to emit the moral and spiritual spark which could ignite similar aptitudes and conduct in the student. Thus alone could the life of *tapas* be lived. The *Atharvaveda* sings the praise of *tapas* as the killer of Death.

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<sup>1</sup> *Katha Upanishad*, II, 7-8, "कुशलानुशिष्ट" and "अनन्यप्रोक्ते गति-सन्नास्ति"।

ब्रह्मचर्येण तपसा देवा मृत्युमुपाध्नत् ।

इन्द्रो य ब्रह्मचर्येण देवेभ्यः स्वराभरत् ॥

(A.V. XI, 5, 9).

According to the *Rigveda* the cosmic procession has started out of the power of *tapas* of the supreme Godhead.

कृतञ्च सत्यञ्चाभी द्यात्रयसोऽध्यजायत् ।

ततो रात्र्यजाचत ततः समुद्रो अर्णवः ॥

(R.V. X, 190,1).

According to the Upanishads also cosmic creation has proceeded out of the power of *tapas* of Prajapati. These are indications of the tremendous significance attached to *tapas* in ancient Hindu thought. Even the critical sects and teachers who challenged the Brahminical theological and philosophical notions, accepted the value and efficacy of *tapas*. Hence necessarily the importance of the teacher who was to train the disciple in the path of *tapas* increased.

We find, thus, that there were three philosophical bases of the role of the teacher in ancient India. First, the association, in several cases, of the teacher with the ritualistic cult imparted to him the significance attaching to the priest. Secondly, the teacher alone could impart the supreme secret of knowledge and thus lead the pupil through the path of spiritual perfection and blissful beatific freedom. Thirdly, the teacher acted as the moral and spiritual guide, besides being the intellectual instructor. Thus we see that the close and intimate associations of the teacher with *Yajna* (यज्ञ), *Jnana* (ज्ञान) and *Tapas* imparted to him a position of great esteem, prestige and reverence.

## 2. Sociological Basis of the Role of the Teacher

Besides philosophical, there were also sociological factors which enhanced the position of the ancient Indian teacher. Towards the end of the Vedic period the stratification of society into four *varnas* was generally taking place. There are evidences, however, to indicate that the traditional fourfold stratification is a conceptual pattern rather than the picture of a concrete social reality. Nevertheless, at least the Brahmin has always been a persistent social real. The teacher almost invariably, though not always, came from the Brahmin social order. There are strong evidences in the Upanishads to indi-

cate that some of the teachers belonged to the Kshatriya order. Some of the kings like Pravahana Jaivali, Silaka, Dalbhya, Asvapati, Janaka and Chitra Gargyayani who were Kshatriyas were famous for their learning. But, by and large, the teachers as a group were recruited from the Brahmanical community. In ancient India the Brahmins as a class enjoyed great esteem. This was a consequence of the devotion of this class to intellectual and theological pursuits. Hence the teacher also, because he generally belonged to the Brahmin class, had come to enjoy social esteem. A similar phenomenon can be seen in medieval Europe where the teachers and professors enjoyed prestige and evoked reverence because some of them were at the same time monks. There was no sharp separation at that period between the school and the monastery. In ancient India the Brahmin was respected because he believed in the supremacy of a contemplative life. The teacher as a member of the Brahmin class also shared in an enhanced social status.

In the ancient Vedic and Upanishadic India education was not under state control. There is no evidence to show the universalistic competence and comprehensiveness of the state. Education and religion were two significant social circles that lay outside the purview of the state. The great kings of those days would occasionally indicate their munificence by large subsidies to the teachers but the organization and management of the educational establishment was a private affair. Since education came under the sector of private enterprise, hence the position of the teacher became significant. The teacher was concerned not only with imparting instruction but he was also the governor of the *Ashrama* or the educational institution.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> In the Upanishads (*Brihadaranyaka*, VI, 2, 1) there is mention of *parishad*. F. E. Keay, *Indian Education in Ancient and Later Times*, (Oxford University Press, 1942), pp. 46-47, says : "The *parishads* were in some respects like judicial assemblies and in others like ecclesiastical synods, but as those who composed them were most of them also teachers, they correspond to a certain extent to the association of teachers in the middle ages of Europe, which developed into universities. Thus not only were different faculties represented, but even a student was a member of the *parishad*. The settlement of Brahmins proficient in different

The latter might be a small establishment, nevertheless, as its manager and organiser who had to make arrangements for its regular upkeep, the teacher discharged a very responsible job and this necessarily tended to accentuate his power, position and dignity. If education would have been a state monopoly and if the teacher would have been merely a job-holder, his position would have been only that of a bureaucrat. But as the controller of an educational Ashrama he enjoyed enhanced administrative dignity and necessarily had more influence over the students than he would ordinarily have had.

In the Vedic and Upanishadic India the economy was dominantly agrarian. A few industries like weaving that were there, were also organised in the villages. There is mention in the old literature of a few towns but these were not industrial establishments but political centres. Since the economy was agrarian, hence life was simple. The necessities of life were few and the main outlook towards life could be expressed in the formula—plain living and high thinking. The students lived with the teacher in the same Ashrama. They participated in the performance of the daily rituals and acts of worship, of which *agnihotra* was the principal item. Sometimes they could also take part in the bigger sacrifices that lasted for a considerably longer period. The students would also tend the cattle of the Ashrama. The cow had come to occupy a special position in the ancient Indian social and economic organization ; we have the instance of Haridrumata Gautama in the *Chhandogya Upanishad* who sends Satyakama Jabala, his pupil, to tend his cattle and the latter returns to the teacher only after a considerable number of years has passed.<sup>1</sup> In this atmosphere of a dominantly agrarian economy, the teacher and the student lived as members of one family establishment.

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branches of the ancient learning in various centres must have meant the gathering together also of a number of students who were receiving instruction from them, and thus these *parishads* would form the nucleus of something corresponding to a university."

<sup>1</sup> *Chhandogya Upanishad*, IV, 4. It is stated that Satyakama was entrusted with four hundred cows and he returned only when they had come to be a thousand.

There was no acute sense of preparing for a vocation.<sup>1</sup> The main stress was on simple living and on preparing to discipline oneself in the virtues of a householder's life. The sense of integral confraternity among the residents developed in such an atmosphere would enhance the sentiments of affection and reverence towards the teacher as the head of the Ashrama. The teacher thus occupied the position not of the promulgator of an educational curriculum, routine and discipline but of the personal head of a family establishment who evoked sentiments of filial piety from his students.

Another factor of a sociological nature which enhanced the importance and status of the teacher was the absence of the printing press. The teacher was functioning not only as the interpreter of difficult texts and passages but he was the embodiment of the texts themselves. The printing press has greatly facilitated the process of study. We have today not only text books but a large number of books of reference which sometimes make it possible to dispense with the need of a teacher. In the Upanishadic philosophy it is stated that for the purpose of self-realization the basic spiritual truths have to be heard from the teacher (*sravana*). After they had been heard from the teacher they were to be intensely meditated upon (*manana*) and thus become organic parts of one's life-philosophy (*nididhyā-sana* and *ātma-sakshatkāra*). In the absence of the printing press, what the teacher said or dictated in the class would be the principal source of study. Consequently the teacher's position and status obtained great enhancement.

Thus we find that several factors of a sociological character helped to increase the position and status of the teacher. First, his affiliations with and belongingness to the Brahmanical social order brought him social respect. Secondly, in the absence of state control over education, the teacher as the organiser and manager of the Ashrama enjoyed power. Thirdly, the agrarian economy of the times imparted to the Ashrama of the teacher the character of a family fraternity and thus also pro-

<sup>1</sup> According to the Upanishads the period of studentship extended to twelve years but sometimes it could go upto thirty-two.

cured for him filial affection and reverence.<sup>1</sup> Fourthly, in the absence of the printing press the teacher was respected as the concrete embodiment of the sacred texts and scriptural knowledge. All these factors cumulatively built up the position of the teacher as a significant figure in ancient India. Indeed, he enjoyed considerable social prestige and sometimes commanded veneration.

### 3. The Vedic Teacher

The teacher, according to the Vedas, had a very important place. The *rishis* who were the composers and singers of the Vedic hymns also acted as teachers.<sup>2</sup> Gradually there developed the teacher-family tradition. The *rishis* who were teachers became so influential that people began to trace their descent from *rishis* and this was the origin of the famous institution of the Gotra.<sup>3</sup> The immense importance which the teacher and the teaching profession enjoyed is clear from the following hymns of the *Atharvaveda*<sup>4</sup> :

1. The Vedic student goes on setting in motion both firmaments ; in him the gods become like-minded ; he maintains earth and heaven ; he fills his teacher with fervour.
2. The fathers, the god-folk, all the gods individually assemble after the Vedic student ; the Gandharvas went after him thirty-three, three hundred, six thousand ; he fills all the gods with fervour.
3. The teacher, taking in charge (*upanayamano*), makes the Vedic student an embryo within ; he bears him in his belly three nights ; the gods gather unto him to see him when born.
4. This piece of fuel is earth, sky the second ; also the atmosphere he fills with fuel ; the Vedic student fills the worlds with fuel, girdle, toil, fervour.
5. Prior born of the *brahman*, the Vedic student, cloth-

<sup>1</sup> Cf. the terms *acharya-kula-vasin* and *ante-vasin*.

<sup>2</sup> Some of the famous Vedic *rishis* were Gautama, Bharadvaja, Visvamitra, Atri, Vasistha, Kasyapa, Jamadagni, Agastya, Angira, Kanva, Medhatithi and Vyasa.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Macdonell and Keith, *Vedic Index*, I, pp. 235-36.

<sup>4</sup> F. E. Keay, *op. cit.*, p. 19, says that this mystic hymn describes the sun or the primeval principle under the figure of a Brahman student or *brahmachari*.

ing himself with heat, stood up with fervour ; from him was born the *brāhmaṇa*, the chief *brahman*, and all the gods together with immortality.

6. The Vedic student goes kindled with fuel, clothing himself in the black-antelope-skin, consecrated, long-bearded; he goes at once from the eastern to the northern ocean, having grasped the worlds, again and again violently shaping them.

7. The Vedic student, generating the *brahman*, the waters, the world, Prajapati, the most exalted one, the viraj, having become an embryo in the womb of immortality ; having become Indra, he has shattered the Asuras.

8. The teacher fabricated both these envelops, the wide, profound, earth and sky ; them the Vedic student defends by fervour ; in him the gods become like-minded.

9. This broad earth, and the sky, the Vedic student first brought alms,<sup>1</sup> having made them fuel, he worships ; in them are set all beings.

10. The one this side, the other beyond, the back of the sky, in secret deposited the two treasures of the *brahmaṇa* ; them the Vedic student defends by fervour ; the whole of that he, knowing, makes *brahman* for himself.

11. The one this side, the other hence, from earth, the two fires come together between these two envelops ; upon them are set the firm rays ; these the Vedic student stands upon by fervour.

\*                     \*                     \*                     \*

13. In the fire, in the sun, in the moon, in Mataricvan, in the waters, the Vedic student puts fuel ; their gleams go about separately in the cloud ; their sacrificial butter is man, rain, waters.

14. The teacher, death, Varuna, Soma, the herbs, milk ; the thunder-clouds were warriors ; by them this heaven brought.

15. Varuna, having become teacher, makes his own the entire ghee, whatever he sought of Prajapati, that the Vedic student furnished, a friend from his own self.

16. The teacher is the Vedic student ; the Vedic student is Prajapati ; Prajapati bears rule ; the viraj became the controlling Indra.

<sup>1</sup> F. E. Keay, *op. cit.*, p. 22 : "In the Middle Ages in Europe we read of some students in the universities subsiding by means of begging, but Indra far surpassed that by making it a rule for all students,....."

17. By Vedic-studentship, by fervour a king defends his kingdom ; a teacher by Vedic-studentship seeks a Vedic student.

18. By Vedic-studentship a girl wins a young husband ;

19. By Vedic-studentship, by fervour, the gods smote away death ; Indra by Vedic-studentship brought heaven for the gods.

20. The herbs, past and future, day and night, the forest tree, the year together with the seasons—they are born of the Vedic student.

21. The earthly, the heavenly cattle, they of the forest, and they that are of the village, the wingless and they that are winged—they are born of the Vedic student.

22. Individually do all that are of Prajapati bear breaths in their bodies ; all these the *brahman* defends, brought in the Vedic student.

23. That, sent forth of the gods, not mounted onto, goes about shining ; from that born the *brahmana*, the chief *brahman*, and all the gods, together with immortality.

24. The Vedic student bears a shining *brahman* ; in that woven together all the gods ; generating breath-and-expiration, then out-breathing, speech, mind, heart, *brahman*, wisdom.

25. Sight, hearing, glory put thou in us ;

26. Shaping these things, the Vedic student stood performing penance on the back of the sea, in the ocean ; he, bathed, brown, ruddy, shines much on the earth.<sup>1</sup>

In this hymn there are several significant, social and educational ideas. The Acharya is one who himself has undergone the Vedic discipline of Brahmacharya. Brahmacharya signifies not only the conservation of the procreative energy but it means austere, holy and consecrated living. In one sense the teacher instructs the pupil but in another sense it might be said that it is the student who provides the incentive and opportunity to the teacher for the maturation of the latter's knowledge. In this hymn there is a reference to the ceremony of the *Upanayana* or initiation into Vedic studies. This is symbolically represented as the keeping by the teacher, as an embryo, of the pupil. This amounts to the view that the pupil is almost the physical progeny of the teacher. The Vedic student helps the

<sup>1</sup> Atharvaveda, XI, 5.

gods and is a source of terror to the demons. He is simple in habits and dress. He resorts to begging alms. By his austeries he establishes almost a cosmic fraternity and the forces of nature are in kinship with him. Even the great god Prajapati is regarded as a Brahmachari. The discipline of Brahmacharya is held to be essential for the preservation of the political organization. The gods are said to have conquered death by Brahmacharya.

It is true that this monumental description of the powers and significance of Brahmacharya is characterised by exaggeration and is full of hyperbolic statements. It may appear ludicrous to mention the operation of the principle of Brahmacharya in the plant and the animal worlds. Nevertheless, even this fantastic exaggeration indicates the immense importance attached to the system of teaching. The technics and process of teaching had almost a cosmic importance because through the perfect grasp of the vital teachings and the realization of their inner significance, it could be possible to establish a sort of psychological identity with the whole of creation. Necessarily in the perspective of this exalted notion of educational discipline, the teacher, as one who was in charge of the entire educational system, would have an enhanced status.

#### **4. The Upanishadic Teacher**

During the age of the Upanishads we find a tremendous spiritual and intellectual quest. The disinterested passion for the highest knowledge that we find in this age and the succeeding Buddhist period has its parallels only in Periclean Greece or Renaissance Italy. The great advance in the depth and width of knowledge can be seen by examining the list of subjects which Narada recounts as having been read by him, to his teacher Sanatkumar. Narada said that he had read the following subjects :-

(1) ऋग्वेद	= The Rigveda
(2) यजुर्वेद	= The Yajurveda
(3) सामवेद	= The Samaveda
(4) आथर्वण	= The Atharvaveda
(5) इतिहासपुराण	= History and Mythology
(6) वेदानां वेद	= Grammar

(7)	पित्र्य	= Rules for ancestral sacrifice
(8)	राशि	= Science of numbers
(9)	दैव	= Science of portents
(10)	निधि	= Science of time
(11)	वाकोवाक्य	= Logic
(12)	एकायन	= Ethics
(13)	देवविद्या	= Etymology
(14)	ब्रह्मविद्या	= Pronunciation, Shiksha, Ceremonial, Kalpa, Prosody
(15)	भूतविद्या	= Science of demons
(16)	शस्त्रविद्या	= Science of weapons
(17)	नक्षत्रविद्या	= Astronomy
(18)	सर्पदेवजनविद्या	= The science of serpents or poisons and the sciences of the genii, such as the making of perfumes, dancing, singing, playing and other fine arts. <sup>1</sup>

This list indicates that only after having studied and mastered the *Aparā Vidya* which is concerned with the cosmic multiplicity can one be a candidate for the knowledge of the *Parā-Vidya* or the knowledge of the transcendent supreme spiritual absolute. The Upanishadic teacher as the revealer of the supreme knowledge, thereby came to occupy a very exalted position. The *Chhandogya Upanishad* says : "As one might lead a person with his eyes covered away from the Gandharas and leave him then in a place where there are no human beings ; and as that person would turn towards the east or the north or the west and south [and say] I have been brought here with my eyes covered, I have been left here with my eyes covered, and as thereupon some one might lose his bondage and say to him, 'Go in that direction, there is Gandhara, go in that direction', and as thereupon, having been informed and being able to judge for himself, he would by asking his way from village to village arrive at last at Gandhara,—in exactly the same manner, does a man, who meets with a teacher to inform him, obtain the true knowledge."<sup>2</sup> The supernal truth is not to be comprehended by the mere logical process of argumentation and dialectics. Only the great teacher can impart the supreme

<sup>1</sup> *Chhandogya Upanishad*, VII, 1.

<sup>2</sup> *Chhandogya Upanishad*, VI, 14. Our Italics

secret. Hence the *Katha Upanishad* says, "He (the self) of whom many are not even able to hear, whom many, even when they hear of him, do not comprehend, wonderful is a man, when found, who is able to teach him (the self), *wonderful is he who comprehends him, when taught by an able teacher.* That (self), when taught by an inferior man, is not easy to be known, even though often thought upon, unless it be taught by another, there is no way to it.....That doctrine is not to be obtained by argument, but when it is declared by another, then it is easy to understand."<sup>1</sup> Thus we see that the comprehension of the absolute gave to the teacher an immensely exalted status because in the language of the Veda be typified the 'brahman-power' which is superior to the 'kshatra-power'. The knowledge that was to be conveyed being esoteric and supra-intellectual in character, great stress was also laid on the moral and spiritual fitness of the student. According to the *Maitrayani Upanishad* the transcendent secret was to be revealed only to a son or to a faithful disciple who had obtained mental equanimity.

The Upanishads enshrine the greatness of some of the eminent teachers of ancient India.<sup>2</sup> In the *Katha Upanishad* we have Yama as a teacher who communicates the knowledge of a transcendent-cosmic character to Naciketas only after thoroughly testing the latter. When he is convinced of the utter immunity of the latter to all types of worldly attractions ; he reveals to him the truth. Raikva is like Diogenes in the utter unconcern for a gentlemanly living. Satyakama Jabala puts his student Upakoshala Kamalayana under an apprenticeship of about twelve years. Indra and Virochana maintain the vow of Brahmacharya for a considerable number of years and only then does Prajapati teach them the science of the self.<sup>3</sup> Accor-

<sup>1</sup> *Katha Upanishad*, I, 2, 7-9. Our Italics

<sup>2</sup> Towards the end of the Vedic period there were different grades of teachers like आचार्य, श्रोत्रिय, महाश्रोत्रिय, कुलगुरु, श्रमण, तापस and वातरशन। Those who distinguished themselves in debates and discussions were called विप्र and कवि। S. V. Venkateswara, *Indian Culture Through the Ages* (London, Longmans, 1928) Vol. I, p. 76.

<sup>3</sup> Indra (Maghavan) lived the life of brahmacharya for one hundred and one years under Prajapati, *Chhandogya*, VIII, 11.

ding to the Upanishads a rigorous moral training was the necessary prelude to spiritual knowledge. The importance that the Upanishadic teacher enjoyed is epitomized in the personality of Yajnavalkya, the hero of many debates and disputations. At a great pan-mid-Indian theological-spiritual congress held at the court of King Janaka, the teacher Yajnavalkya battled against the towering representatives of traditional wisdom like Asvala, Jāratkārava Ārtabhadra, Bhujyu Lalyāyani, Usasta Chākrāyana, Kahola Kaushitkeya, Gargi Vāchaknavi, Uddalaka Aruni and Vidagdha Sakalya. The exalted idealism of the philosophic teachings of Yajnavalkya is comparable to that of Plato, while his simplicity and utter indifference to worldly comforts remind one of Socrates. When Yajnavalkya would visit Janaka the latter would bow down to him. Once Janaka said to Yajnavalkya : "May that fearlessness come to you also who teaches us fearlessness. I bow to you. Here are the Videhas and here am I (thy servant)."

This tradition of the eminence of the teacher continued as a permanent legacy of the Vedas and the Upanishads to the subsequent Indian tradition. Patanjali in his *Yoga-sutras* goes to the extent of calling God as the primeval teacher. In the literature of the medieval Indian mystics like Kabira, the teacher is regarded as being on an equal footing with God himself.

The significance of the Upanishadic teacher in the contemporary culture of the country and the immense solicitude that he had for the good of the student will be apparent from the following passage of the *Taittiriya Upanishad*.

"After having taught the Veda, the teacher instructs the pupil :

'Say what is true ! Do thy duty ! Do not neglect the study of the Veda ! After having brought to thy teacher his proper reward, do not cut off the line of children ! Do not swerve from the truth ! Do not swerve from duty ! Do not neglect what is useful ! Do not neglect greatness ! Do not neglect the learning and teaching of the Veda ! Do not neglect the (sacrificial) works due to the Gods and Fathers ! Let thy mother be to thee like a god ! Let thy father be to thee like a god ! Let thy teacher be to thee like a god ! Let thy guest be to thee like a god ! Whatever actions are blameless, those should be regarded, not others. Whatever good works have been performed by us, those should be observed by

thee,—not others. And there are some Brahmanas better than we. They should be comforted by thee by giving them a seat. Whatever is given should be given with faith, not without faith,—with joy, with modesty, with fear, with kindness. If there should be any doubt in thy mind with regard to any sacred act or with regard to conduct,—In that case conduct thyself as Brahmanas who possess good judgment conduct themselves therein, whether they be appointed or not,<sup>1</sup> as long as they are not too severe, but devoted to duty. And with regard to things that have been spoken against, as Brahmanas who possess good judgment conduct themselves therein, whether they be appointed or not, as long as they are not too severe, but devoted to duty. Thus conduct thyself. This is the rule. This is the teaching. This is the true purport (Upanishad) of the Veda. This is the command. Thus should you observe. Thus should this be observed.'

May Mitra be propitious to us, and Varuna, Aryaman also, Indra, Brihaspati, and the wide-striding Vishnu ! Adoration to Brahman ! Adoration to thee, O Vayu ! Thou indeed art the visible Brahman. I proclaimed thee alone as the visible Brahman.

I proclaimed the right. I proclaimed the true. It protected me, it protected the teacher. Yes, it protected me, it protected the teacher. Om ! Peace ! Peace !<sup>2</sup>

## 5. Conclusion

In the Vedic and Upanishadic India the teacher had a very significant place. Besides the great Ashramas which were something like forest universities, there were numerous great teachers who held burning the torch of knowledge and wisdom. The teacher was the spiritual and intellectual father of his disciples and the latter were to pay the 'debt' due to him. The monumental image of the venerable Vedic *acharya*, ripe in wisdom and age and pronouncing sacred words of benediction has caught powerfully the imagination of the Indian people. Throughout the later years that tradition has been reinforced by other figures like Vasistha, Visvamitra, Bhisma, Drona, Kripa and others. Even in modern India the veneration of Vivekananda for his teacher Ramakrishna and of Maharsi Dayanada for his Vedic preceptor Virajananda was unique.

<sup>1</sup> The Sanskrit words *yuktāḥ* and *āyuktāḥ* are also translated as apt and devoted.

<sup>2</sup> *Taittiriyopnishad*, "Stikshadhyaya", XI & XII.

When Dayananda appeared to pay his *dakshina* to his teacher, Virajananda took a sacred promise from him that he would dedicate his whole life to the emancipation of the motherland through the spread of Vedic learning. The forlorn and forsaken condition of the modern Indian teachers bears absolutely no comparison to the glorious days of old. Today teachers take pride in flattering the bureaucrats and political superiors. During the Vedic and Upanishadic days the kings felt pride in humbling themselves before the Acharyas.

## Philosophy of Education in Plato's Republic

**P**lato is one of the foremost thinkers of the world. He has not only a very important place in the history of European intellectualism but will be remembered as one of the giants in the realm of the advancement of the human mind. He was a great mathematician, was deeply versed in the ancient Hellenic classics, had a great predilection for the use of the geometric method in philosophy, was an acute dialectician and had a very comprehensive encyclopaedic mind. He had the soul of a poet and the fine sensitiveness of an artist. Above all, he was a great constructive genius who could not only epitomize the quintessence of Greek philosophy but could enrich the ancient heritage by original creations of his own. The Alexandrian imperialism of Macedon is gone into oblivion but Plato lives to-day and continues to be a vital force impelling noble thoughts and genial creativity. His *Republic*,<sup>1</sup> which is the greatest production of this colossal thinker and philosophical genius, is a treatise on metaphysics, eschatology and ethics. It also embodies some significant thoughts about the nature of the political community. In the discussion of the formative forces for the perfection of the community, Plato analyses the theory and foundations of education. Some of his suggestions are still important. Similar views are stressed also in our Hindu scriptures and classics. There are remarkable similarities in the educational ideas of the *Republic*, the *Atharvaveda* and the *Upanishads*.

Plato is a persistent part of the tradition of the West. He is an abiding influence. He is a moulder of some of the fundamental patterns of the Western mind. St. Augustine had regarded him "divine" and the Platonic philosophy has been a

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<sup>1</sup> In this Chapter, the references are to B. Jowett's translation of *The Dialogues of Plato*.

significant inspiration both in the formulation and the revival of idealism in Germany, Russia, Great Britain and the U.S.A. Plato's famous concept of immutable archetypal ideas reappears in a modified form in Whitehead's concept of "eternal objects". Paul Deussen deciphered common points in the systems of Plato, Samkara and Kant. Plato has had a sympathetic response even from Indian thinkers. Sri Aurobindo has thought of Plato and Samkara as "divine" figures. The nobility, sublimity and the philosophic exaltedness that characterize Plato's writings have always an immense appeal for the modern Indian mind also. During the present quarter of a century certain interpreters of Plato have given a somewhat bizarre commentary upon his thought. Warner Fite has accused Plato of dogmatism. Crossman, a British Laborite states that the militarist Plato would approve the use of force, violence and murder if employed for noble ends. Arnold Toynbee who is an expounder of the Christological interpretation of history laments the cold philosophic absorption of the philosopher-guardians who do not have the altruistic love for human transformation. The Protestant theologian Rainhold Niebuhr condemns not only Plato's ethics but moral theory itself as born of intellectual pride and takes refuge in the sanctuary, of what the agnostic and the sceptic would consider, a doubtful Christian revelation. Perhaps the most damaging attack on Plato has come from Karl Popper, a naturalized British utilitarian who after his exile from Austria found shelter in the political and social philosophy of Bertrand Russell. Popper debunks Plato as a totalitarian racialist, a historicist, an apostle of violence, an apologist of tribal morality and the maker of an insidious attempt to arrest change and progress.<sup>1</sup> On the matter of Platonic interpretation I adopt a traditional approach. I regard Plato as an idealist and a believer in the regeneration of human society and politics by bringing upon them the transforming impact of the illuminating light of chastened and perfected cognition.

## **I. Philosophical Foundations of Education**

According to Plato the universe is an organic, purposive

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<sup>1</sup> Karl Popper, *The Open Society and Its Enemies*, 2 vols.

and spiritual whole. The component elements of the universe are not disconnected and disparate but are permeated with an all-informing spiritual principle. The cosmos is not the mechanical outburst of physical force and energy but is the phenomenal appearance of the supreme reality—the realm of ideas. The ideas are not subjective figments of the human mind but are real in themselves. They inhabit, as if, a blessed super-terrestrial world of their own. The things of the world are only pale reflections of the ideas. The Idea of the Good is the highest all-comprehensive idea. The human individual is a pilgrim in the world. He is not to lead a life of mere vegetative, appetitive and sensuous satisfactions. Sense-gratification is the mere feasting of animal propensities and cannot be regarded as the aim of a rational creature. Man is to transcend the bounds of his egoistic circumference. He is to get beyond mere sensational hedonism and is not to rest satisfied with the maximization of human comforts. The immediate goal of man is social self-communion. It is only in a community of intelligent human beings that he can realize the manifestations of the creative social teleology. He can develop the potentialities of his being only in a process of dynamic reciprocity and mutuality with the selves of other intelligent human beings. The self-realization of man can be attained through expanding and liberalizing his own consciousness by the social processes of accommodation, adjustment and harmonization with the lives of other human beings. Social and political life should be oriented to the betterment of the society as a whole. The good of the social whole and the achievement of its perfection is the aim of the human being. Thus, according to Plato, an all-informing social teleology is the dominant concept of all philosophical approaches to the problems of man. But the realization of social self-communion and political harmonization is only one part, although a very significant part, of a man's life-aims. Man has also to contemplate on the destiny of the cosmos and the beatific nature of the ideas. This second, divine-oriented aim of a man, implies that the political community does not exhaust the contents of the expansive consciousness of the human mind and soul.

The nature of the human mind and soul is one of the fundamental problems of Plato's psychology and metaphysics. The interpreters of Plato's thought like Nettleship and Barker are confused on this point because they do not have a clear comprehension of the two levels at which Plato speaks. On this point I believe that we, with our background of ancient Hindu thought, are in a better position to understand the mentality of the Greek thinkers of old. The ancient Hindu psychology made a very clear and explicit distinction between the mind and soul of a man. Plato also, I think, makes a similar distinction. The Greek word *nous* stands for the mind and intellect, or the *Manas* and *Buddhi* of the Samkhya psychologists. The Greek word *psyche* stands for the soul—the spiritual immortal principle. According to Plato, the soul has an immanent spiritual destiny. It is a spiritual reincarnating<sup>1</sup> principle<sup>2</sup>. This spiritual soul "recollects"<sup>3</sup> what it has learnt in previous heavenly existences. This conception of "recollection" or "reminiscence" is not understood by the modern European interpreters of Plato's thought.<sup>4</sup> But in Buddhist psychology and in the *Yoga-Sutras* of Patanjali we find references to the remembrance of previous births by the Yogins. Krishna in the fourth Chapter of the Bhagavadgita also refers to the recollection of his previous births. The modern critics of Plato, historically separate from him by over two thousand years are desperately busy in minimizing the significance of "transmigration" and "recollection" as they

<sup>1</sup> *Phaedo*, 81-82.

<sup>2</sup> *Phaedrus*, 246 : "The soul through all her being is immortal, for that which is ever in motion is immortal; but that which moves another and is moved by another, in ceasing to move ceases also to live. Only the self-moving, never leaving self, never ceases to move, and is the fountain and beginning of motion to all that moves besides."

<sup>3</sup> *Pheadrus*, 249 : "this is the recollection of those things which our soul once saw while following God. When regardless of that which we now call being she raised her head up towards the true being."

<sup>4</sup> It is possible that Plato may have formulated this concept of "reminiscence" in opposition to the Sophistic view that knowledge is perception.

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appear in Plato's thought,<sup>1</sup> but Indian philosophy shows that the ancients did believe in such notions. In the context of these concepts of the transmigration of the soul and the recollection of previously acquired knowledge (in earlier births) we can understand the significance of some of Plato's statements about virtue being innate and as being incapable of being taught.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Meno*, 82 : "there is no teaching, but only recollection."

<sup>2</sup> *Protagoras*, 361 : "My only object, I said, in continuing the discussion, has been the desire to ascertain the nature and relations of virtue ; for if this were clear, I am very sure that the other controversy which has been carried on at great length by both of us—you affirming and I denying that virtue can be taught—would also become clear. The result of our discussion appears to me to be singular. For if the argument had a human voice, that voice would be heard laughing at us and saying : 'Protagoras and Socrates, you are strange beings ; there are you, Socrates, who were saying that virtue cannot be taught, contradicting yourself now by your attempt to prove that all things are knowledge, including justice, and temperance, and courage,—which tends to show that virtue can certainly be taught ; for if virtue were other than knowledge, as Protagoras attempted to prove, then clearly virtue cannot be taught ; but if virtue is entirely knowledge, as you are seeking to show, then I cannot but suppose that virtue is capable of being taught. Protagoras, on the other hand, who started by saying that it might be taught, is now eager to prove it to be anything rather than knowledge ; and if this is true, it must be quite incapable of being taught.' Now I, Protagoras perceiving this terrible confusion of our ideas, have a great desire that they should be cleared up."

*Meno*, 100 : "To sum up our enquiry—the result seems to be, if we are at all right in our view, that virtue is neither natural nor acquired, but an instinct given by God to the virtuous. Nor is the instinct accompanied by reason, unless there may be supposed to be among statesmen some one who is capable of educating statesmen. And if there be such a one, he may be said to be among the living what Homer says that Tiresias was among the dead, 'he alone has understanding ; but the rest are flitting shades' ; and he and his virtue in like manner will be a reality among shadows.

Men. That is excellent, Socrates.

Soc. Then, Meno, the conclusion is that virtue comes to the virtuous by the gift of God."

This notion also bears remarkable resemblance to the Buddhistic and yogic conception of *Samskaras* according to which a man can only develop along the lines of his innate tendencies which have been cultivated in the previous existences. It is impossible to make a revolt against *Samaskaras*. They assert themselves with an elemental vehemence and destroy all attempts to check their natural march. Plato's stress on virtue being innate has the implication of a remarkably similar notion and he wants to assert that not every person can be made virtuous. Thus we see that the concept of the human soul as an immortal spiritual principle is of uttermost educational significance in Plato's thought. Its full worth and import become apparent when we analyse Plato's scheme of higher education in dialectical philosophy. Several modern interpreters of Plato tend to ignore this metaphysical substantialistic conception of the soul. They advocate a psychological approach to the problem and want to view the soul as the mere harmonious organization of personality. So far as the human personality is concerned, the soul even if conceived psychologically, does provide unity and organization. But the real problem is whether it is only the name for some kind of organization or is an autonomous entity in its own right. I think that Plato's writings do contain corroborations for the metaphysical conception of the soul also. The tenth book of the *Republic* will be inexplicable on the assumption of the merely psychological conception of the self. It does have to be acknowledged, however, that the notion of the self as a metaphysical entity is never so pronounced and explicit in Plato as in the Samkhya or the Nyaya schools of thought.

The conception of spiritual "recollection" has two implications for a philosophy of education. First, it implies a belief in many existences. In the existences of the past, the soul has learnt the beatific nature of the primordial archetypal ideas but due to the veil of blinding ignorance it has forgotten them. Education is that process of intellectual enkindling which could redeem the patrimony of spiritual knowledge. Secondly, this concept of recollection is postulated on the acceptance of a cyclical view of history and the cosmos. The history of the universe and human beings is not, according to

Plato, the story of a straightlineal advance but it is possible that there have been many cycles of the cosmos. The golden age is not in the future but in the past. What is happening today might possibly have happened several times before. Thus the theory of recollection makes Plato look back to the lost and forgotten ideal aristocracy of old.

Plato stresses the ennoblement of the mind by a systematic process of cultural and educational training. It is essential that the human mind should undergo a rigorous process of intellectual discipline. Plato regards the human mind as plastic. It is a growing and developing organism which is susceptible to the moulding influence of the diverse types of social and natural environment wherein it lives. It is not a static and closed entity. It is a dynamic force and has the capacity of directing itself to the external world and to absorb the good and the evil present there. Hence it is essential to educate the mind in an atmosphere permeated with the manifestation of the good, the noble and the aesthetic. If recollection of the forgotten spiritual vision is the principal theme in the education of the human soul, moulding the human mind by a process of rigorous intellectual discipline is the fundamental conception of Plato's theory of culture. But this sharp separation between the soul and the mind which is suggested by this analysis is not thoroughly worked out by Plato himself although it is possible to substantiate this standpoint by relevant passages from Plato's works. Generally speaking the distinction is blurred and sometimes or most of the times Plato's stress is on rational wisdom as the primary virtue of the mind and the soul, spoken together and comprehensively.

Throughout the *Republic* we find either direct statement or suggestions that the universe including the human beings is a spiritual whole. The universe is not a hostile and alien force suppressing the growth of human beings but is permeated with a spiritual principle. The universal spirit is sometimes regarded as God and thus a teleological meaning is provided both to the events and phenomena in the universe and moreover there is a scale of values to be realized for the human selves. Thus throughout the *Republic* we move in an intellectual atmosphere permeated with a spiritual significance.

## 2. Sociological Foundations of Education

The Greek thinkers were enamoured of the significance of the *polis*. To them it was the most fascinating and important social entity. They could never sympathise with the Hindu view that the anchorite and the monastic celibate leading a solitary existence in some Himalayan cave or on the banks of the river realized the depths of the meaning and value of human life. To the Greeks the city-state was a sensuous entity amenable to aesthetic and intellectual apperception and cognition. They felt the city as immediately as they felt their own lives. The dichotomous juxtaposition of the right of the individual versus the right of the state would have been something unthinkable to the Greeks. The city-state, to them, was the visible monument of their past heritage. It symbolized the unity of the commonwealth. It inspired them to fresh and further pursuits in the path of collective endeavours. Hence in his educational philosophy Plato attributed primacy to the city-state or the *polis*. To the modern democratic ear, brought up in the atmosphere somewhat of hostility to the state, generated by the teachings of individualism, Plato's teachings amount to state interference, regimentation and dictated uniformity. But to Plato the *polis* was an aesthetic and organic whole wherein the individual obtained fullness and maturation. Hence in pleading for the sovereignty of philosophers in the city he thought not in terms of the mechanism of authoritarian control but wanted to stress the perfection of the community. It is to be noted, nonetheless, that one of the cardinal points of sociological significance in Plato is that the state is the supreme authority in matters of education. According to Hegel, the family is in charge of education. For several centuries in India and the West a large part of education has been under the control of religious associations. But Plato's educational plans and technics are to be under the management and control of the state.

A point of great sociological significance in the Platonic scheme of education is the conception of social rationality and functional dexterity. The political community is a whole, but is not an undifferentiated whole. It is not a monolithic unity but an organic unity of functional interdependence. There are

three classes in the state—the guardians, the auxiliaries and the producers. All these classes have specific functions to perform and it is essential that they perform these duties well. This implies a division of labour and the concentration of energies for the discharge of the allotted functions. Without devoted concentration for a number of years it is not possible to obtain the requisite skill in works. The Hindu sociology of *Varna* was also based on a similar notion of specialization of labour. In this way it is possible to avoid a good deal of unnecessary waste of energy consequent upon cut-throat competition. The Platonic and the Hindu sociology are oriented to the notion of a co-operative, functionally-integrated commonwealth and they try to avoid the mechanics of wasteful competition.

The Hindu theorists of old advocated that the institution of *Varna* was of divine origin. They, thus wanted to place this important institution beyond the pale of discussion and change. This generated the frame-work of an out-dated and sometimes anti-social rigidity and conservatism. Plato also wants to imbue the citizens of his state with the teaching of the Phoenician Myth which is an old tale of venerable origin. It teaches that all citizens are sons of the earth—the common mother, which has reared them up for long in her womb. Hence they are bound by the tie of fraternity. But this sentiment of solidarity is only one part of the Phoenician Myth. The second part of the myth teaches that there are three kinds of men—of gold, of silver and of brass and iron. The guardians are made of gold as their essence.<sup>1</sup> The military auxiliaries are made of silver and the producers are constituted of brass and iron. Thus all these classes have different constituent essences and it is essential that they devote themselves to their specific work which is best fitted to their psychological make-up. Plato, nevertheless, does contemplate also a transposition of ranks, if the individuals belonging to different classes fail to muster the requisite essence. It is possible for the son of a guardian to be degraded to the

<sup>1</sup> Hesiod (referred to in Plato's *Cratylus*, 397), speaks of a golden race of men who came first and says of them :—

“But now that fate has closed over this race  
They are holy demons upon the earth,  
Beneficent, avengers of ills, guardians of mortal men.”

class of producers. Similarly, it is possible for the son of a producer to be raised to the position of a guardian. Thus, in theory, the Phoenician Myth is oriented to social impartiality. It postulates a social order based on the harmonization of the differential faculties—of the several classes—all serving common social needs. Thus we find that there are two significant conceptions in the sociology of education according to Plato—first, the state control of the educational processes, technics and mechanism, and second, the notion of social division of labour oriented to the pursuit of functional specialization and dexterity.

### 3. Elementary Education

The theme of the education of the defenders and rulers of the city has been elaborately discussed in the *Republic*. Plato divides education at the elementary stage into two branches—gymnastic for the body and music for the soul. Music is used by Plato in a comprehensive sense and also includes literature and art and may be taken to be as inclusive as the term culture. It includes the tales and stories narrated to children in very early years and hence comes before gymnastic. Plato is very careful to stress that in very tender years the children should not be allowed to hear any ignoble and perverse stories about gods. He advocates strict censorship of the tales and stories and he would not exclude even Homer and Hesiod from this censorship. He rightly thinks that if stories of the quarrels and unseemly behaviour of gods are narrated before children, the souls of the latter will be contaminated. Sometimes it is argued that in the guise of divine tales, some important truths and notions are allegorically represented. But Plato is not convinced by this argument. The souls of the young are too tender and impressionable to be trusted with such allegorical representations. Hence Plato pleads that God should be represented as only the author of good. It is highly impious to ascribe the origin of evil to God. Plato says : "...he must say that God did what was just and right, and they were the better for being punished ; but that those who are punished are miserable, and that God is the author of their misery—the poet is not to be permitted to say ; though he may say that the wicked are miserable because they require to be punished, and are

benefitted by receiving punishment from God ; but that God being good is the author of evil to any one is to be strenuously denied, and not to be said or sung or heard in verse or prose by any one whether old or young in any well-ordered commonwealth. Such a fiction is suicidal, ruinous, impious."<sup>1</sup> Hence it is essential to represent God as being only good. This is the first principle of Plato's theology. A second principle is that God is eternal and immutable and is not liable to change either from the impact of an external source or from within.<sup>2</sup> Thus Plato's God is eternally realized perfection and is absolutely uncontaminated with any falsehood or evil. Plato wants the future rulers to be trained in noble conceptions and sentiments about God because they will try to imitate the attributes and characteristics of God and will be moulded accordingly. In his book, *The Laws*, also Plato wants the citizens to accept the existence, providence and justice of God.

Besides reforming theology, Plato also wants that mythology should be reformed and children and boys should learn that the heroes and gods are beings of noble character. Sometimes the poets draw very ominous and dark pictures of the underworlds and thus it is possible that the boys will be afraid of dying and consequently will be prevented from risking death at moments of trial. Hence such passages which depict a dismal and fearful underworld are to be deleted from the works of the poets because "there is a danger that the nerves of our guardians may be rendered too excitable and effeminate by them."<sup>3</sup> According to Plato, the great heroes are to be represented as having always preferred death to slavery. They should not be depicted as indulging in effeminate lamentations. The guardians are to be trained in heroic and philosophical equanimity. They are not to mourn for the loss of a friend or son or brother or for the deprivations of fortune. A sense of stoic heroism, calm gravity and balance are to mark their bearings and it is essential that the guardians should have such representations of gods and heroes which teach strength of character. The lamentations of Achilles and of Priam and

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<sup>1</sup> *The Republic*, II, 380.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, III, 386.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, III, 387.

Zeus are not to be allowed to be heard by boys. The future guardians should not be encouraged to excesses of laughter by the example of the gods. The young men of Plato's state are to be truthful. No citizen is to engage in false statements. Only for the good of the state as a whole, may the rulers occasionally indulge in lie (*the noble lie*). Besides truth, the citizens are to be trained in temperance and hence the indecent tales of gods and heroes should never be repeated before boys. Plato says : "And further they are likely to have a bad effect on those who hear them ; for everybody will begin to excuse his own views when he is convinced that similar wickedness are always being perpetrated by 'the kindred of the gods, the relatives of Zeus, whose ancestral altar, the altar of Zeus, is aloft in air on the peak of Ida,' and who have 'the blood of deities yet flowing in their veins' (from the *Niobe* of Aeschylus). And therefore let us put an end to such tales, lest they engender laxity of morale among the young."<sup>1</sup> Our fundamental goals and ideals are slowly internalised in our lives and hence it is essential that gods and heroes should be represented as the concrete personifications of the noblest ideals.<sup>2</sup> Evil, deception, falsehood, submission to tyranny, fear of death in a noble cause, excess of emotionalism and proneness to sensualism should have absolutely nothing to do with their lives and character. Thus we see that besides advocating educational technics, Plato also assumes the role of a religious reformer. Just as Buddha attacked the notions and concepts of Vedic theology, so also Plato hurls his blasts against some of the outworn and morally damaging ideas of Greek theology and mythology. In modern India, Dayananda also appeared as a great critic of the Puranas on similar grounds.

Plato also wants to reform literature. No poet is to be allowed to indulge in immoral statements. He is to be prevented from advocating the triumph of injustice over justice. Plato strictly adheres to the sociological principle of specialization.

<sup>1</sup> *The Republic*, III, 391.

<sup>2</sup> Plato condemns the stories of the unseemly behaviour of Zeus, the indecent tale of Ares and Aphrodite, the stories of the gifts taken by Achilles and Phoenix and the tale of Theseus and Peirithous. ↓

The guardian has to play only one role in life—to defend the city and hence he must concentrate all his energies to this specific vocation. The guardians, hence, should not try to imitate too many things, because one man can dedicate himself only to one task. According to Plato : "Poetry and mythology are, in some cases, wholly imitative—instances of this are supplied by tragedy and comedy ; there is likewise the opposite style in which the poet is the only speaker—of this the dithyramb affords the best example ; and the combination of both is found in epic and several other styles of poetry."<sup>1</sup> The selection of literary works for purposes of education is to be based on the principle of their fitness for intensifying the requisite traits of character in the guardians. If the particular passage teaches virtue, it is to be retained but it is to be eliminated if it supports illiberality or baseness or is meant to generate a festering volume of contamination with evil. Imitations, if continued for a sufficiently long number of years, become a part of man's being and total personality and hence the strictest care is to be taken in the choice of what is to be imitated and what not. Only noble characters whose lives teach the promotion of the beauty of reason are to be imitated and the ignoble ones are to be shunned. Those literary pieces which inculcate the noble and the good are to be retained and those which indulge in the glorification of the unscrupulous and the abominable are to be carefully avoided. Hence Plato says : "Then he will adopt a mode of narration such as we have illustrated out of Homer, that is to say, his style will be both imitative and narrative ; but there will be very little of the former, and a great deal of the latter."<sup>2</sup> Plato is an advocate of the simple style, the complex and the multiplex are not to be favoured. The pantomimic artist who can display his skill and dexterity at many kinds of imitation is to be honoured but is to be banished out of the state. Plato's devotion to the concept of moral concentration for the good of the state is absolute. He says : "For we mean to employ for our soul's health the rougher and severer poet or story-teller

<sup>1</sup> *The Republic*, III, 394.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, III, 396.

who will imitate the style of the virtuous only."<sup>1</sup>

Plato has presented his reforms of theology, mythology and literature. The next point that he takes up for consideration is music in the limited sense of melody and song. He wants to banish from the state the Ionian and the Lydian melodies or harmonies which are relaxed. Only the Dorian (for heroism) and the Phrygian (for temperance) harmonies which stress strength, firmness, determination, devotion to God and mental equanimity are to be retained. Plato is also opposed to the flute. He would only permit the lyre and the harp. So far as rhythm is concerned Plato refers to—(a) the cretic, (b) the dactylic or heroic, and (c) the iambic and trochaic. He does not make specific recommendations on this point but says that the general principle of grace should be adhered to and ugliness and inharmonious discordant motion be avoided. According to Plato beauty of style and harmony and grace<sup>2</sup> and good rhythm depend on simplicity. But by simplicity he means not the simplicity of ignorance as found in the child but the true simplicity of a rightly and nobly ordered mind and character. He stresses that the future guardians of the city should be brought up amidst the atmosphere of scenes of beauty and grace and harmony because these suggest goodness and virtue. Artistic representations of intemperance, meanness and indecency are to be forbidden in the state. He says : "Let our artists rather be those who are gifted to discern the true nature of the beautiful and graceful ; then will our youth dwell in a land of health, amid fair sights and sounds, and receive the good in everything, and beauty, the effluence of fair works, shall flow into the eye and ear, like a health-giving breeze from a purer region, and insensibly draw the soul from earliest years into likeness and sympathy with beauty of reason."<sup>3</sup> Rhythm and harmony find their way into the depths of the being of the soul and they mould it accordingly and thus their significance in the process of education being immense, care has to be exercised in their choice.

<sup>1</sup> *The Republic*, III, 398.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, III, 401 : "grace and harmony are the twin sisters of goodness and virtue and bear their likeness."

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*

The discussion of theology, mythology, literature, rhythm and melody are comprehended under music (in a wider sense) and education in the latter (in music) is to be given in early years. But Plato is careful to give a moral and Philosophic orientation to music. He says that the guardians can never become musical until they know the essential forms in all their combinations and can recognise them and their images wherever they are found. Music has a comprehensive moral, philosophical and literary orientation and its study is genuinely significant in the early years of education. But Plato's proposals sound puritanical and his methods and technics appear coercive and authoritarian. It is true that in enunciating some of his ideas Plato has been influenced by the theories and practices of Sparta. His fundamental aim is sound and pure. He is not speaking as a literary critic but as the builder and legislator of an ideal state and hence he does not want to tolerate anything that can have the least tendency to corrupt or render weak and nervous the souls of the young citizens. He does take recourse to strict methods of control of literary and artistic productions. There is some resemblance between Plato's proposals and the methods of censorship followed in totalitarian regimes but the resemblance is absolutely superficial. Modern fascists and dictators try to control the educational process in order to convert it into an agency for the transmission of the ideology that will strengthen the foundations of their power. Plato, on the other hand, is hinting at every radical disease in the structure of the moral foundations of education. He wants to build up strong men of sturdy and firm character and is not at all concerned with perpetuating the regime of any particular aristocracy or fascistic elite. Hence I am surprised to find that some self-styled critics of Plato like Popper should try to find in the *Republic* the roots of modern totalitarian concepts and technics. Plato's intentions are sound and I agree with him in thinking that the intellectual environment of children has to be strictly guarded. It is also superficial to compare Plato's ideal and technics with the religious inquisitions of the Middle Ages.

After the discussion of music in a very comprehensive sense, Plato undertakes the analysis of gymnastic. It (gymnastic)

should begin in early years. Plato is firmly of opinion that gymnastic should be continued through life.<sup>1</sup> In the lives of Dayananda and Shraddhananda we find that till their last days they took regular physical exercise. In Europe also Tolstoy and Gladstone used to engage in manual labour till their very old age. Surendranath Banerjee took physical exercise even when he was beyond sixty. According to Plato there should be a harmony between physical and intellectual development. In the Vedas also we find the ideal of the combination of the *Brahma* and the *Kshatra* powers. According to Plato the soul is primary and hence he wants that the trained mind should take particular care of the body. His own belief is "not that the good body by any bodily excellence improves the soul, but, on the contrary, that the good soul, by her own excellence, improves the body as far as this may be possible."<sup>2</sup> He is opposed to the cult of mere athleticism and amassing of sheer physical strength because this produces idleness. "Do you not observe that these athletes sleep away their lives, and are liable to most dangerous illness if they depart, in ever so slight a degree, from their customary regimen."<sup>3</sup> Plato advocates the cultivation of sturdiness and hardiness. He wants his citizens to be able to bear heat and cold. They should be capable of braving all kinds of dangers. Plato is a supporter of military gymnastic. He prescribes abstention from drinks and advocates the avoidance of rich food and costly cookery. He also believes like the Hindu sages that sensuality is inimical to health and hence he prescribes strict temperance. Luxury fosters disease and so simplicity is to be preferred. Plato's ideas regarding the significance of gymnastic are comparable to the stress that Vivekananda has laid on physique in several of his books. Swami Vivekananda always put the primacy on the development of the body as a starting-point. Even for the purposes of Yoga a strong physique is needed as the base (*ādhara*). Bodily vigour imparts intellectual vitality also. A diseased body

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<sup>1</sup> *The Republic*, III, 403 : "Gymnastic as well as music should begin in early years. The training in it should be careful and should continue through life."

<sup>2</sup> *The Republic*, III, 403.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, 404.

cannot be the inspirer of noble, vital and vigorous thoughts. Hence in the discipline of Raj-Yoga, before one can achieve *Samadhi*, it is essential to practise the technics that strengthen the body like *Brahmacharya*, *Asana* and *Pranayama*. In the Upanishads also we always find stress on the culture of the "Annamoya Kosha." In powerful words the *Mundukopanishad* says that the soul cannot be realized by the weak (नायमात्मा वलहीने लभ्यः).

Plato has rightly pointed out that a man who has received the best education and has ennobled his soul and perfected his body will not need a doctor or a lawyer. "Is it not disgraceful, and a great sign of want of good-breeding, that a man should have to go abroad for his law and physic because he has none of his own at home, and must therefore surrender himself into the hands of other men whom he makes lords and judges over him?"<sup>1</sup> It is bad to go to law and it is worse to relish litigation. Plato also thinks that an educated man will not need the help of a doctor. The ideas of Plato and Gandhi are remarkably similar on this point. Like Plato, Gandhi, in his book *Hind Swaraj*, considers the growth of lawyers and doctors not as a sign of progress but as evidence of the bankruptcy of moral values and self-discipline. Plato is not opposed to resorting to medicine to cure a wound or at the time of an epidemic but he does not want the feeding of disease by intemperate habits. In the olden days, in the times of Aesclepius and Homer, the practice of medicine was not complicated and elaborate. Since the time of Herodicus, however, there was great growth of medicine and a way was found of struggling on to old age. Plato is in favour of rough and ready remedies. He is opposed to a life which is spent in nursing disease. To educate and to nurse disease and to engage in slow cure is an enemy of a virtuous life. However, Plato is not absolutely opposed to having doctors and judges but he wants the good brand. The good doctors are those who have not only the theoretical knowledge of their science but "have combined with the knowledge of their art the greatest experience of disease. They had better not be robust in health and should

<sup>1</sup> *The Republic*, III, 405.

have had all manner of disease in their own persons."<sup>1</sup> But few would be willing to become doctors if the latter part of this Platonic condition were rigorously enforced. On the other hand, the judge is to know evil not by personal experience but by long observation of evil in others. The judge should not be young. His guide is knowledge and not experience. The fundamental principle of Plato is that the practice of temperance will be a bar against litigation and the practice of simple gymnastic will render medicine superfluous except in some extreme cases.

Plato advocates the harmonious development of music and gymnastic. Excess of music tends to produce excitability and effeminacy. Excess of gymnastic leads to barbarity and brutality. Hence it is essential that the future rulers of the state should have a trained mind and a trained vigorous body. They should be gentle but not soft ; they should be courageous but not hard and brutal. Plato advocates the cultivation of harmonious proportion between the spirited and the philosophical principles of human nature. "And he whomingles music with gymnastic in the fairest proportions, and best attempers them to the soul, may be rightly called the true musician and harmonist in a far higher sense than the tuner of the strings."<sup>2</sup>

#### **4. Education in Science and Philosophy**

Education has the supreme place in the state according to Plato. Good *nurture* and education implant in the minds of the citizens the significance and spirit of good constitutions and "these good constitutions taking root in a good education improve more and more, and thus improvement affects the breed in man as in other animals." In the Platonic scheme primary education is imparted from the age of six to the age of fourteen. From the age of fourteen to the age of eighteen is the stage of secondary education. The two years from the age of eighteen to that of twenty are to be devoted to military training. At the age of twenty there is to be an examination

<sup>1</sup> *The Republic*, III, 408.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid*, III, 412.

for selection and those among the candidates who have shown a greater aptitude for things of a more advanced character are to be selected to undergo a more rigorous training in the abstract sciences and philosophical dialectics. The rest of the candidates are to become auxiliaries and their special virtue will be courage. The "dye of law" would implant in their heart the things one is to be afraid of and the things one is not to be afraid of. But while the basis of the virtue of these military auxiliaries is opinion, the guardians who will be the rulers of the state will be specialists and wise men and knowledge will be the foundation of their virtue. They will have a vision of the whole and they will have not only regenerate emotions and chastened sensibilities but also very sharp logical training and an abstract power of perception of the dominant principles of the cosmos.

According to Plato, ten years are to be devoted to the study of the mathematical sciences as the propaedeutic to the study of philosophy. Arithmetic is an essential subject of study because it imparts a sense of accuracy and precision. The military man needs the art of number for arranging his troops in right order. Arithmetic is also a preparation for philosophy because it teaches the mind to argue about abstract numbers since it is not concerned only with sensuous entities. "You know how steadily the master of the art ridicule any one who attempts to divide absolute unity when he is calculating, and if you divide, they multiply, taking care that one shall continue one and not become lost in fractions."<sup>1</sup> Arithmetic gives intellectual quickness and alertness. Geometry also has a practical use in war, for example, in pitching a camp or taking up a position or extending the lines of an army. But it is also a preparation for the study of the philosophy of the good and the eternal. Geometry, according to Plato, draws the soul away from the transient and thus creates the philosophic spirit. First, the study of plane geometry is carried on and then begins the study of solid geometry. After geometry astronomy is taken up. Higher astronomy is an abstract science. The vision of heavens gives an indication of a divine plan. "Will

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<sup>1</sup> *The Republic*, VII, 525.

he not think that heaven and the things in heaven are framed by the Creator of them in the most perfect manner?"<sup>1</sup> But astronomy is not perfect. It is also a preparation for the highest philosophy wherein we study the true motions of absolute slowness and absolute swiftness. Plato agrees with the Pythagoreans in regarding astronomy and harmonics as sister science. But these also have to be studied not merely as empirical sciences but with full reference to their ultimate philosophical worth.

The study of arithmetic, plane and solid geometry and astronomy and harmonics takes ten years. This mathematical study is concerned with the refinements of the understanding while the highest philosophy is devoted to the achievements of reason. The distinction between *Verstand* (understanding) and *Vernunft* (reason) which we find in the German idealistic philosophy is also very clearly and sharply formulated by Plato. He says that the sciences are concerned with hypothesis. They try to approximate to the fundamental principles but do not obtain them. Philosophy, on the other hand, is the science not of hypotheses but of principles. The emphasis on the preliminary study of the sciences, in Plato, is to some extent comparable to the stress on the study of Jyotisha as a Vedanga before one embarked on the study of the Vedas. In the *Chhandogya Upanishad* also we find that before Sanatkumar teaches the supreme truth to Narada, the latter catalogues before him all the other preliminary sciences that he had studied so far.

The study of the sciences occupies ten years from the age of twenty till the age of thirty. The study of the highest knowledge which is philosophy occupies the five years from thirty to thirty-five. This study for five years is concerned with the dialectic. Dialectic is the rational apprehension of the essential truth of things. It is a study of ideas and their synthetic interrelations. The study of the dialectic is greatly aided by the previous study of the sciences because thereby the power of elevating the highest rational principle in the soul to the meditation of the essences (ideas) is greatly facilitated. The highest knowledge which the dialectic imparts finally

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<sup>1</sup> *The Republic*, VII, 530.

culminates in the idea of the good which is the highest idea. According to Plato the world is like a cave or underground den where man is immersed in ignorance. Progressive emancipation from this cave of ignorance is consequent on the release of the mental powers of men. The final state of intellectual perfection is the attainment of the splendours of reason or the cognition of the highest knowledge and being. The idea of the good is "the universal author of all things beautiful and right, parent of light and the lord of light in this visible world, and the immediate source of reason and truth in, the intellectual."<sup>1</sup> The knowledge of the idea of the good is supremely important because this being the highest essence and the highest reality, it is that which imparts the intellectual vision of the whole. So long as a man knows only the part and fragment of things his actions are faulty, but when he has a vision of the whole he can take a firm and wise course of action in this world. But the knowledge of this highest truth requires certain natural gifts. It is essential to have keenness and ready power of acquisition. Good memory, strength of character, industry and love of truth are significant elements among the requisites to a dialectical perception of truth. Moral virtues like temperance, courage, magnificence etc., are also essential. This vast and complicated system of education, as has been already stated, requires a sound body and mind and can be undertaken when a man's powers are fully developed because youth is the time for any extraordinary toil.

It is supremely important that the rulers of the state should be highly trained. They must not be sceptical about the sanctity of inner moral virtues. They must not dabble in the "eristic" art of argumentation for the sake of mental gymnastic but should be dialecticians aiming to comprehend the highest truth. The process of the acquisition of dialectical knowledge involves a complete transformation of the personality of man because it gives inner vision and light. It is the path of the cognition of the highest being. Plato says : "the power and capacity of learning exists in the soul already, and that just as the eye was unable to turn from darkness to light

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<sup>1</sup> *The Republic*, VII, 517.

without the whole body, so too the instrument of knowledge can only by the movement of the whole soul be turned from the world of becoming into that of being, and learn by degrees to endure the sight of being, and of the brightest and best of being, or in other words, of the good.....the virtue of wisdom more than anything else contains a divine element which always remains and by this conversion is rendered useful and profitable.”<sup>1</sup>

After having mastered the sciences and the dialectical philosophy and thus having obtained the vision of the idea of the good, the guardians should devote themselves to political works. It was for this supreme vocation that they had been given all the rigorous intellectual training. From the age of thirty-five till the age of fifty, that is, for fifteen years, these trained guardians should hold some military or other political office. Thus they will get practical experience of life and will also have the opportunity to test their moral stamina and strength. These fifteen years of their lives are very important from the standpoint of the reformation of the community. Even if they may not be willing to descend from the Olympian heights of philosophic contemplation they will be “compelled” to make a sacrifice of their personal delight and will take part in transforming the collectivity in the mould of their philosophic idea of the perfect state.

For fifteen years the enlightened rulers will try to reform the state by holding political offices. At the age of fifty they, in a sense, will retire from politics. “.....the time has now arrived at which they must raise the eye of the soul to the universal light which lightens all things, and behold the absolute good ; for that is the pattern according to which they are to order the state and the lives of individuals, and the remainder of their own lives also ; making philosophy their chief pursuit but, when their turn comes, toiling also at politics and ruling for the public good, not as though they were performing some heroic action, but simply as a matter of duty ; and when they have brought up in each generation others like themselves and left them in their place to be governors of the state, then they

<sup>1</sup> *The Republic*, VII, 518.

will depart to the Islands of the Blest and dwell there ; and the city will give them public memories and sacrifices and honour them.<sup>1</sup>

These enlightened philosophic rulers represent the highest element in the state. They are committed to the preservation of justice. They esteem right above all things and they despise the temptations of this world. The human race will be saved the recurrent crises and disasters and will get the bliss of perfection only when political greatness and philosophic depth and vision mingle into one. The ideal state will become a realized actuality only when philosophers become kings or the kings and princes of this world have the spirit and power of philosophy.

### **5. Critique and Conclusion**

Plato has revealed to us a vast and exalted vision of human life. To him, the life of man has to be raised beyond mere appetitive satisfactions and hedonism. He conceives of human life as a profound consecration for the realization of some dominant objective. He interprets life as a dedicated sacrament in quest of the ultimate good. To advocate that a man should spend thirty-five years in a process of rigorous discipline and should perfect his sensibilities, moral habit, scientific understanding and rational powers of abstraction, may appear very difficult from the point of commonplace standards and criteria. But the Platonic idealism receives its justification in the transitoriness of the pleasures and pursuits of life. If the indulgence in sensuous pleasures could lead us anywhere and could have any stability of its own, then there might have been some justification for its attainment. But it is ephemeral and evanescent. It belongs to the realm of shadow and appearance. Hence, according to his metaphysical presuppositions, Plato proposes to transform human life in the image of the eternal, the immutable and the primordial. For a materialist, it may be difficult to agree with the notion of the good as advocated by Plato but even the materialist will have to accept that Plato's scheme has a lot of justification.

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<sup>1</sup> *The Republic*, VII, 540.

No body will deny the solid and permanent good that can be derived from the harmonious pursuit of gymnastic, literature, art, science and philosophy. The experiences derived from the pursuit of these are more satisfying and lasting, even if it may be difficult to accept the heavenly pattern of the ideal world. The Platonic conception of the full efflorescence of the total potentialities of man greatly inspires me. What Plato aims at is not merely the development of the human personality but the transfiguration of the social life in the image of the ideals that have been internalized in the lives of the rulers through a rigorous process of hard intellectual labour and moral discipline. The Platonic ideal has a remarkable similarity to the Hindu philosophy of life as outlined by Mahidasa Aitareya in the *Chhandogya Upanishad*. Mahidasa regards the whole of human life as a sacrifice. The morning *Savana* is for twenty-four years. Higher than that is the midday *Savana* which is for forty-four years. The highest of all is the third *Savana* which is for forty-eight years. In each of these *Savanas* one has to cultivate moral virtues and to develop the powers of *Prana*. Hence, both Plato and the Upanishads teach us that if we want to realize some values and norms, what is needed is discipline, moral guidance, intellectual development and spiritual comprehension and contemplation. According to the idealist view of life all the other types of human endeavours have to be rooted in the vision of the spirit because it is the source of all vitality, energy, being and essence.

Plato gives us not only a comprehensive and exalted view of human life, he also provides an exalted conception of education. The aim and goal of education is not only personal development and advancement but the ascent of the individual towards the cognition of the dialectical synoptical "idea of the good" is immensely significant. But even that is not all. Along with the process of *ascent* there is a process of *descent* and the philosopher has to use his energies and powers for the redemption of the sins, sorrows and sufferings of the body politic. He is not to remain absolutely aloof from the world. This ideal of Plato is remarkably similar to the ideal of Karmayoga preached in the *Bhagavadgita*. Krishna says that

although he has nothing personal to gain in the three worlds, still he participates in the process of action in order to help going the cosmic wheel of sacrifice and to set a noble ideal for the people of the world. This conception of participation in social and political action as set by Plato and Krishna is more comprehensive than the equally great but socially disastrous ideal of renunciation preached by two of the most hallowed names in India's history—Buddha and Samkara. India today needs the ideal of Karmayoga—an ideal which we find typified in the lives of Tilak and Gandhi. Hence I feel that the Platonic conception of the transformation and regeneration of political life by infusing into it the dominant moral and spiritual norms is of great contemporary significance.

Sometimes the Platonic ideal of combining the highest philosophy with military activities may appear fantastic. According to the Platonic scheme the philosopher-guardians of the city-state receive military training from the age of eighteen till the age of twenty. Besides these two years of compulsory military training, Plato expects the guardians to take to military duties, if necessary, between the age of thirty-five and the age of fifty. To combine political skill and excellence with philosophic introspection and contemplation appears possible but to combine military activities and spiritual growth appears fantastic. But in defence of Plato, nevertheless, it can be pointed out that in the ancient days warfare was a simple affair and the implements used in war did not require any elaborate training. Even Socrates, the great teacher of Plato had actual experience of a battle. In ancient India also we find that Krishna, Rama, Drona, and Bhismia combined the skill for inflicting defeats on the enemy in a battle with the knowledge of the Vedas and philosophy. The only conclusion that can be put forward on this issue is that although very difficult, it is not impossible to combine military skill and philosophic and scientific attainments.

Plato has throughout the *Republic* stressed the importance of moral virtues. The main burden of this book is to teach an elevated conception of politics by inculcating the inwardness of justice. This emphasis of Plato has remarkable similarity to the moral orientation stressed by Buddha, Patanjali, Vyasa

and Manu. Plato wants his citizens to be devoted to truth. Addiction to falsehood is impious. He wants that the virtue of temperance should work as a harmonising principle throughout the state. Temperance is one of the most essential of the moral virtues stressed by the Greek thinkers and is similar to the concepts of *Dama* and *Samyama* of Hindu ethics. Plato also accepts the value of non-accumulation of money. The guardians are not to be receivers of gifts or lovers of money. They are to be almost ascetic in the matter of money and should not touch gold and silver. Thus we find that habituation in the moral values and virtues is a fundamental conception both in the Greek and the Hindu traditions. I consider this emphasis essential from the standpoint of human civilization. Today the ingenuity and scientific inventiveness of man have built up the external edifice of a vast civilization but in the absence of the pursuit of moral values, humanity is heading towards a deadly holocaust. The groups of power-seekers are amassing personal wealth and are engaged in a tireless campaign of calumination against their political antagonists. But Plato and Buddha want that the rulers should be imbued with high moral ideals.

Plato's ideal of education is also significant because he stresses the aesthetic side of life. He recognizes the great power of beauty and grace in the building up of a man's character. He also wants the proportionate development of the human body. But as a philosopher, Plato is not mainly preoccupied with physical beauty though that is not deprecated. Both in the *Republic* and the *Symposium*<sup>1</sup> he preaches the concept of absolute and eternal beauty. In this sense beauty becomes identified with reality. In the Hindu *Puranas* as well as in the *Kena Upanishad* we have the representation of Uma—the concrete divine embodiment of absolute beauty. These notions of the absoluteness and divinity of beauty are significant because they provide a way for the sublimation of our ordinary infatuation and lust for the sensuous and for physical beauty. To Plato

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<sup>1</sup> *The Symposium*, 211-12 : "...the true beauty—the divine beauty, I mean, pure and clear and unalloyed, not clogged with the pollutions of mortality and all the colours and varieties of human life."

this kind of information is gross and vulgar. He would plead for the transformation of consciousness through the realization of spiritual beauty. This kind of sublimation is also an integral part of education.

Plato was a great metaphysician but he had advanced social views. The scheme of elementary and higher education that he has outlined is meant both for males and females. This proposal of Plato is sound from the standpoint of the most advanced sociology and psychology and the modern advocates of female emancipation will find in Plato a great supporter.

The basic sociological theme of Plato is division of labour and the implied concentration of energy in the pursuit of one specific vocation. It is true that sometimes absolute concentration on one minor point leads to atrophy and it dulls the creative powers of the human being. It also creates a false sense of the significance of the limited viewpoint as if it were the entire thing. Hence the fragmentary and the partial is transferred to the place of the whole. The true ideal for an educated citizen is to have some knowledge of many things and full knowledge of one thing. It is true that concentration upon one task is the secret of the growth of creative powers. All the monumental achievements in the fields of art, literature, science and philosophy are the products of years of prolonged and intense concentration. Plato rightly felt that the art of rulership also needs specialized training and concentrated application. The sophists had been trying to transform politics into an easy game of verbal argumentation, flash and wit. But Plato stressed that rulership also is an art and it needs great training. In the modern democratic age also we are faced with a similar crisis. It is believed today that politics can be managed by the amateurs. But it has been found possible to exploit the sentiments and prejudices attaching to groups, races, classes and castes to attain personal power. To the shameful record of democracy in several countries it has to be pointed out that raw and incapable persons have found their way to some of the important places of political honour because of their affiliations with or belongingness to certain castes or groups. Plato appears as a relentless foe of the vulgarization of politics. No body but the trained expert in the highest

disciplines of literature, sciences and philosophy is to wield the political sceptre. Politics is not the refuge of the failed, the incapable and the frustrated but is the dynamic instrument to serve the nation. The desire to serve is the natural outcome of the true philosophic vision of the whole. Hence Plato's stress on functional specialization and enlightened philosophical rulerships is of tremendous significance in the era of the debasement of politics by the shallow, the vulgar and the mediocre.

Plato's philosophy and sociology of education is integrally connected with his philosophy of culture. He is opposed to barbarism. Hence he goes beyond the picture of the original primitive state based on utter absence of worldly objects and commodities. But he is not satisfied with mere civilization either. In Sparta there was a concentration on military gymnastic and discipline. Athens leaned towards a literary and aesthetic orientation. Plato inculcated the synthesis of both. He wanted to synthetize both aesthetic and intellectual, and military training but he always imparted primacy to the human spirit. Plato's references to beatific realization of the heavenly ideas would convincingly indicate that he even wanted the spiritual transfiguration of the mere aesthetic culture as conceived in Athens. Plato rejects savagery and barbarism and preaches the synthesis and sublimation of civilization and culture by the practice of spiritual harmony based on the turning of the inward eye. Being a philosopher and a spiritual metaphysician he does not advocate the democratization of cultural norms by mass education. It may be regarded as a radical defect in his theory of education that he has nothing to offer for the enlightenment of the producing classes and he, rather unjustifiably, concentrates all his attention to the training of the auxiliaries and the guardians.

Plato is not fascinated by the growth of Athenian trade and commerce. He is opposed to economic accumulation as a source of war. Hence he is not enamoured of the complexity and the heterogeneity of a sophisticated civilization. He pleads for simplicity. He does not sanction aggression. But he does believe in righteous indignation and would like his citizens to be ever prepared to lay down their lives for the sake of the country. He advocates simplicity because it gives energy and

strength and the man practising the cult of simplicity finds time for concentrating his energies upon other laudable pursuits and elevating enterprises. Plato's fascination for the cult of simplicity may sound a little reactionary and he may be classed along with Rousseau, Tolstoy and Gandhi as an enemy of civilization. But it is certainly true that Plato was not a ruralist or an Arcadian enthusiast. He rightly felt that accumulation and aggressiveness were the disease of civilization. He believed that the salvation for man does not lie in any amassing of the external frame-work and commodities of the contemporary civilization. The disease lies deeper. Man as an emotional, volitional and cognitional being has to be saved from a too easy engrossment in the paraphernalia of a complicated commercial civilization. The recovery of man requires the limitation of his wants and the release of moral and spiritual energies. We are painfully realizing that perhaps we have paid very dearly by concentrating on the accumulation of commodities and forgetting the soul of man. Hence it is essential once more to repeat in the words of the Upanishads and Plato—“Man ! know thyself.”<sup>1</sup> Plato has a great message for our modern world indeed.

<sup>1</sup> *Apology*, 30 : “For know that this is the command of God ; and I believe that no greater good has ever happened in the state than my service to the God. For I do nothing but go about persuading you all, old and young alike, not to take thought for your persons or your properties, but first and chiefly to care about the greatest improvement of the soul. I tell you that virtue is not given by money, but that from virtue comes money and every other good of man, public as well as private.”

## 3

*Aristotle***I. Philosophical Foundations of Education**

Aristotle (384-322 B.C.) is considered, perhaps the most encyclopaedic writer in the entire range of European thought and his ideas on education are still worth study. His notions on politics, ethics and poetics are very significant. Although the scientific foundations of his intellectual edifice have been subjected to terrific onslaughts by the rise of Newtonian and modern physics, and Darwinian and post-Darwinian biology, still in the realms of social and cultural thought and educational and metaphysical speculations, his contributions have not only historical importance but are still very influential. According to the Greeks, education was a moral and spiritual process for the full efflorescence of human potentialities and worth and hence it was almost the essence of citizenship. They felt that life was an integral whole and its capacities had to be developed to the maximum. The separation that operates today between moral life on the one side and the governmental process or social activities on the other, would have been something incomprehensible to them. The axiological and valuational approach was uppermost in their intellectual enquiries. The state, to them, was not a mechanical contrivance or a necessary evil or a concentrated Leviathan of force, but it was an organic entity solidified by the moral and subjective bonds of a common partnership in the arts of a noble collective existence. The necessity of providing the needs of social life might have led to the origin and evolution of the *polis* but its highest nature and purpose could be concretized only through the realization of an honourable, self-sufficing, perfect and noble life for all the participating members. The *polis* is not a mere exchange-aggregation nor a group united merely by the bonds of physical proximity or spatial contiguity but is a community for the embodiment<sup>\*</sup> of the ideals of reason

and virtuous activity. Since the *polis* is an organic body, it is essential that its character should be determined by the choice of the best life.

There can be three possible types of life according to Aristotle. The lowest type is the sensuous life engaged in physical and vital gratifications. Its aim is gross hedonism and the pursuit of pleasures. It may be compared to the view propagated by the Carvakas in ancient India and is similar to the *tamasic* view of life referred to in the *Bhagavadgita*. Higher than this sensuous and appetitive life is the life of the warrior and the politician. The political and military life, if led among a community of freemen is quite praiseworthy. Aristotle is a critic of the despotic and tyrannical life which delights in subjugating people who do not deserve enslavement. Hence he is bitterly hostile to the Lacedaemonian (Spartan) view which carried the art of war-making almost to a brutalizing finality. But the political life among equals, based on the principle of equalitarian reciprocity that all should rule and be ruled in turn, he considers a worthy ideal. Nevertheless, in the *Nicomachean Ethics*, Aristotle points out some weaknesses of even the political and military life. "Now the activity of the practical virtues is exhibited in political or military affairs, but the actions concerned with these seem to be unlesurely. Warlike actions are completely so, but the action of the statesman is also unlesurely, and apart from the political action itself, aims at despotic powers and honours, or at all events happiness, for him and his fellow citizens—a happiness different from political action, and evidently sought as being different. So among virtuous actions, political and military actions are distinguished by nobility and greatness, and these are unlesurely and aim at an end and are not desirable for their own sake."<sup>1</sup> The fundamental objection to considering the political life as the highest goal of man, thus, is that its end is not immanent in itself. It is only possible with reference to other people. The just man needs people towards whom and with whom he can act justly, and the temperate man, the brave man and the politician, and others are in the same category. Hence Aristotle praises the

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<sup>1</sup> *Nicomachean Ethics*, X, 7.

third and the highest life, the life of the self-sufficient philosophers contemplating the eternal truth. The life of reason is the highest because reason is the essence of man and is divine in its nature. "If reason is divine, then, in comparison with man, the life according to it is divine in comparison with human life. But we must not follow those who advise us, being men, to think of human things, and being mortal, of mortal things, but must, so far as we can, make ourselves immortal, and strain every nerve to live in accordance with the best thing in us ; for even if it be small in bulk, much more does it in power and worth surpass everything."<sup>1</sup> Hence the conclusion of the *Nicomachean Ethics* is that the life of the contemplative philosopher is the highest, most akin to the life of God<sup>2</sup> and is higher than the moral and political life.

But in the *Politics* Aristotle moderates the rigor of the distinction between the political life and the contemplative life. He believes that the life of virtuous activity is the highest. He does away with the ordinary distinction between thought and activity and states that thought itself is activity.<sup>3</sup> He becomes averse to the isolation associated with the life of pure contemplation and although never a protagonist of supreme political power, he ascribes to political and moral life a more exalted character than his philosophy of the hierarchical superiority of reason to moral virtue would allow him. He categorically states : "If we are right in our view, and happiness is assumed to be virtuous activity, the active life will be best for cities collectively and for individuals. Not that a life of action must necessarily have relation to others, as some persons think, nor are those ideas only to be regarded as practical which are pursued for the sake of practical results, but much more the thoughts and contemplations which are independent and complete in themselves ; since virtuous activity, and therefore a certain kind of action, is an end, and even in the case of external

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>2</sup> In the *Metaphysics*, 1177a/26, the highest branch of contemplation is called by the name of theology and in the *Eudemian Ethics*, 1249b/20 the ideal is depicted as "the worship and contemplation of God."

<sup>3</sup> Cf. the similar statement of Giovanni Gentile.

actions the directing mind is most truly said to act."<sup>1</sup> If we analyze this passage closely and keep in mind the conclusion of the *Nicomachean Ethics* it is clear that Aristotle is faced with a great dilemma. If he would stress the superiority only of the self-sufficient divine and rational contemplative life, there is danger that the other conception of the moralization of political life advocated by him in the *Politics* may appear secondary. Hence if in one line he praises virtuous activity, in the next sentence he pleads for the worth of contemplation. To do justice to Aristotle it can be said that although the life of intellectual virtues is the highest, the life of moral virtues in alliance with at least one intellectual virtue, that is, practical wisdom, is almost the highest, when we are talking on the social and political plane. In other words, if the divine life of the philosopher is the highest from a purely theoretical standpoint, the life of the synthesis of the ideals of the best man and the best citizen in a constitutional polity is the highest that is possible and realizable in an imperfect world. Education is that process of systematic training and instruction whereby the citizen may be most enabled to realize this practical ideal. Hence the great significance of education in moral and political life is evident. According to Aristotle, the goods of the soul cannot be attained without an adequate supply of goods of the body and external goods. He does not regard the association of morality and penury as logical. Even for leading a life of virtuous activity, the *polis* is necessary because it alone can, by its resources, make possible such a life. The *polis* is an important and organic category in moral existence. Education is the process of the awareness in man of the primacy of the realization of his own personal goals and the goals of social existence, which, however, are mutually entirely linked up and cannot be realized in separation. Hence it is clear that the ideal of Aristotle is comparable not to the Advaita Vedantic ideal of immersion and complete absorption in the depths and silence of the eternal being but is partly similar to the ideal of *karmayoga* preached in the *Bhagavadgita* and the *Yajurveda* which visualized a synthesis of action and

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<sup>1</sup> *Politics*, VII, 3.

knowledge (*karma* and *vidya*). Thus it can be said that, according to Aristotle, education is not the path of salvation from the demands of the empirical world and its relativistic canons of action but is the process of supplementing the deficiencies of nature and thereby enabling man to perform his duties of creative and enlightened moral citizenship.

Aristotle is absolutely emphatic in his assertion that the justice and the happiness<sup>1</sup> of the individual and the state are the same. Their ends are the same—the realization of the perfect life. But since the individual cannot realize his end alone, hence the *polis* is essential. Aristotle is not a moral individualist. According to him the individual belongs to the *polis*. His entire scheme of educational sociology is constructed on the basis of this ideal and he stresses the perfect harmonization of the physical and political means for the realization of the end (i.e., purpose) of the happy life. According to Hobbes, felicity is equivalent to the pursuit of pleasure. The Utilitarians sponsored the notion of the two sovereign guides of pain and pleasure for the clarification of the process of human action. But in Aristotle's view happiness, although it contains an element of pleasure, is not equivalent to pleasure.<sup>2</sup> Pleasure (*hedone*) is merely pleasing to the minds and senses. But there is an element of permanent worth in happiness (*eudaimonia*). In the terminology of Indian thought we can say that *hedone* or pleasure is equivalent to *Sukha*, and *Eudaimonia* or happiness is equivalent to *Ananda*. Education, according to Aristotle, is the art of acquiring happiness and its aim is not the pursuit of pleasure because the latter can be enjoyed even by untrained and uneducated men. Thus it can be said that intellectual enjoyment contains not only the element of pleasure but also of the noble which is the path of virtue.

There are three constituents of the virtuous life—nature, habit and rational principle. The three must be in harmony with one another. Nature, in Aristotle's philosophy is the most

<sup>1</sup> *Nicomachean Ethics*, I, 13 : "Since happiness is an activity of the soul in accordance with perfect virtue....."

<sup>2</sup> According to Aristotle a man is not really virtuous unless he finds pleasure in the exercise of virtue.—Newman, *The Politics of Aristotle*, p. 368.

fundamental concept. Nature is the vital, immanent essence and material of things. Hence to start with, one must be born a man, before he can profit by any system of education. A beast or an utter lunatic cannot be educated. According to Aristotle the best material to profit by education is a nature which contains the elements both of spirit and passion as well as of intelligence. Due to his Greek prejudice, he found the best synthesis of this psychological material in the Greeks. He never considered man to be either completely evil or wicked. In man there are elements both of self-love and social instinct. If he is not trained in the arts of just, decent and socialized existence then the beastly propensities begin to predominate in him but if he gets proper training then he can rise even to the heights of the divine being. When man realizes the fullness of his essence, only then can he be said to have attained his final purposes and aim. This is possible only in the state. Education can supplement nature but it can never create nature. It can, through moral training and rational instruction and wisdom, only rectify and modify the deficiencies of nature. Moral habit and reason are the fruits of education. Aristotle pleads for the whole development of human nature. He says : "Animals lead for the most part a life of nature, although in lesser particulars some are influenced by habit as well. Man has rational principle, in addition, and man only. Wherefore nature, habit, rational principle must be in harmony with one another ; for they do not always agree ; men do many things against habit and nature, if rational principle persuades them that they ought."<sup>1</sup> Thus it is accepted that it is through moral and rational culture that the actualization of the potentialities of a man is possible. In case of inanimate things and instruments the end (the goal) can be imposed on them from without. But in the case of man, his end or nature is immanent in him.

The significance of habit in the realization of the moral nature of man is very striking in Aristotle and it has a fundamental place in his educational philosophy. Habit is defined by him in the *Metaphysics*. "Having a habit means a disposition

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<sup>1</sup> *Politics*, VII, 13.

according to which that which is disposed is either well or ill disposed, and either in itself or with reference to something else ; e.g., health is a habit, for it is such a disposition. We speak of a habit if there is a portion of such a disposition; and so even the excellence of the parts is a habit of the whole thing.<sup>11</sup> In the exposition of his educational ideas, habit refers to the formation of good dispositions to action in the earlier years before one becomes an adult. It (habit) is different from the principle of functional specialization referred to by Plato because the latter refers to the training received in adult age while habit refers to the early years. Aristotle attaches greater weight to the formation of habits than Plato because, more than his speculative master (Plato), the former was concerned with the moral training acquired in the process of habituation to the customary law and ethics of the *polis*. Training in habits is to come earlier than rational training. But although significant as an educational category, habit, in Aristotle, does not have the some spiritual significance which *Abhyasa* has in the philosophy of the *Bhagavadgita* or in the *Yoga* system of Patanjali.

According to Aristotelian metaphysics the lower is for the sake of the higher and the body is for the sake of soul. Aristotle divides the soul of man into two parts—the irrational and the rational. The irrational part is trained by the cultivation of moral virtues. Moral virtues, like the arts, are acquired by the repetition of the corresponding acts. Although these acts cannot be prescribed exactly, still they must avoid excess and defect. Aristotle was the great teacher of the ethical mean or moderation—the *Madhyama* way. Pleasure in doing virtuous acts is the sign that the virtuous disposition has been acquired. Moral virtue is a state of character and not a passion, nor a faculty. It is a disposition to choose the mean. The extremes are opposed to each other and to the mean. The mean is difficult to be attained but can be grasped by perception, not by reasoning. Moral virtue involves the exercise of a choice between divergent alternatives. According to Aristotle freedom of choice is an important ingredient and can be said to be

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<sup>1</sup> *Metaphysics*, V, 20.

almost the essence of moral life. Choice implies deliberate and willed desire of things and indicates the exercise of psychological power and thus it means that the action chosen and resorted to, is not the consequence of external constraint. The main categories of moral virtue are courage, temperance, liberality, magnificence, magnanimity, ambition, good temper, friendliness, truthfulness, ready wit and justice. A complete theory of moral education will prescribe the ways and methods of attaining excellence in these virtues. But since the account of education in the *Politics* is incomplete, hence, we do not have a detailed categorization of the technics of the cultivation of these virtues on a large collective scale. But the important point is that Aristotle recognizes this principle of moral education and the significance of habit. From the very earliest years he wants the children to be habituated to hard life. "For human nature should be early habituated to endure all which by habit it can be made to endure ; but the process must be gradual."<sup>1</sup> He wants the directors of education to control the use and circulation of stories, pictures, statues etc. in order that from the very childhood the future citizens may learn temperance. Music also is recommended by Aristotle but only to the extent that it teaches temperance and is an aid to rational life. He is very emphatic in his statement that the irrational part of the soul should be trained by temperance. Temperance is a cardinal moral virtue in Aristotle's *Ethics*. Its opposites are self-indulgence and insensibility. He says : ".....for in an irrational being the desire for pleasure is insatiable even if it tries every source of gratification, and the exercise of appetite increases its innate force, and if appetites are strong and violent they even expel the power of calculation. Hence they should be moderate and few, and should in no way oppose the rational principle—and this is what we call an obedient and chastened state—and as the child should live according to the direction of his tutor, so the appetitive element should live according to rational principle. Hence the appetitive element in a temperate man should harmonise with the rational principle ; for the noble is the mark at which both aim, and the temperate man craves for the things

<sup>1</sup> *Politics*, VII, 17.

he ought, as he ought, and when he ought, and this is what rational principle directs."<sup>1</sup>

The aim of education, however, will not be complete only by stressing the training in moral virtue. Moral training is not complete in itself. It is for the growth of intellectual enlightenment. According to Aristotle the process of education which begins at child-birth, and in some sense even earlier than that, is to find its culmination in the development of reason. Rationality is thus the consummation of the educative process. The full realization of the intellectual virtues is the final purpose of education. Aristotle says that the training of the body is for the sake of the growth of temperance and the training of the irrational part of the soul is for the sake of the rational part. He thinks that such part should be trained with a view to the higher. The development of the rational faculty alone is thus the true and final purpose of education. Reason, according to Aristotle, has two parts. The first or contemplative reason is concerned with the gnosis of truth. The second or calculative or practical reason is concerned with truth corresponding with right desire. Politics is mainly concerned with practical reason while science, intuitive reason and philosophic wisdom are the fields of physics, metaphysics and ethics. If moral virtues are produced as a result of habit (*ethos*), intellectual virtues owe their birth and growth to teaching and hence require experience and time. The essence of moral virtues is habituation in the sound norms of social existence but intellectual virtues contain in them also a transcendental element ; but transcendental does not mean here that they are entirely trans-cosmic but only stresses that these intellectual virtues can be rationally and intuitively felt and meditated upon and are not solely immanent in the social structure of the *polis*. Intellectual contemplation is a noble task and imparts the highest happiness. Happiness is the realization and perfect exercise of virtue. This virtue has to be, not merely conditional but absolute, that is good in itself. When a state has the greatest opportunity for obtaining happiness, only then can it be said to be well-governed. Hence it is evident that education has a vital role to play in the reali-

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<sup>1</sup> *Nicomachean Ethics*, III, 12.

zation of happiness. Happiness is achieved by virtuous activity and contemplative activity. Thus Aristotle's exalted conception of education would distinguish him from those pedagogists who concern themselves mainly with instruction and transmission of information. To Aristotle, education is an integral process of social, moral, political and intellectual advancement of the citizens.

## **2. Sociological Foundations of Education**

According to Aristotle an ideal citizen is one who conforms to the character of the constitution. His virtue is relative in the sense that it has to act according to the canons of that particular constitution wherein the person is born and resides. He is to be moulded to suit the form of government under which he lives. In the sketch of the best state that Aristotle has provided in books VII and VIII of the *Politics*, he states that all citizens should rule and be ruled in turn. When young they should be military-men and obey the rulers. When old they should become councillors and command others. Aristotle pleads for some difference between the education of the rulers and that of the ruled and this may sound contradictory to his other statement that there should be the same, uniform public education under state law for all the citizens.<sup>1</sup> This contradiction will not be of any great consequence in the best polity of Aristotle, because there the same citizens who are subjects in the younger years will be rulers when they are old. Hence they must learn to obey when young. So far as the virtues of commanding are concerned they may acquire that in later life. The true statesman must be a wise man<sup>2</sup> and must have knowledge of what Euripedes says : "No subtle arts for me, but what the state requires." Aristotle stressed the adaptation of the pattern of education to the form of government because it contributes most to the permanence of constitutions. Hence it is, that he praises Sparta. But by the statement that citizens should be "educated in the spirit of the constitution," Aristotle

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<sup>1</sup> *Politics*, Book VIII, 2 and Book VII. According to *The Politics*, 1333 a/1, the education of the governors and the governed must be the same and also different.

<sup>2</sup> *The Politics*, 1277 a/17.

does not mean that the citizens should perform those actions in which oligarchs and democrats delight but that they should perform those actions by which the existence of an oligarchy or democracy is made possible.<sup>1</sup> Hence he says that women and children should be trained by education with an eye to the constitution.<sup>2</sup> In the context of modern democratic and constitutional practices it is possible to accept Aristotle's proposal that there should be laws to regulate education.<sup>3</sup> But serious objections can be made to his proposals of total control and management of education by the state. In modern democracies there is a steady tendency towards the separation of the state and the universities. Except for military training, the other branches of education are receiving the maximum degree of autonomy from state interference. Modern dictatorships, on the other hand, consider education to be a function of the state and have converted the process of education into a process of propaganda of doctrines, creeds and theories recognized as valid by the ruling parties. The stress on uniform, public and compulsory education would signify that the ultimate function of the state is pedagogic, according to Aristotle. Since the end of the state and of the individual is the attainment of human happiness,<sup>4</sup> therefore the process of education in the spirit of the constitution would promote the realization of the sense of inter-subjective inter-dependence and would thus establish harmony between human action and the ends of social existence.

According to Aristotle the realization of moral and intellectual virtues is the highest aim of education. He stresses the performance of honourable actions. Necessary, useful and profitable actions, on the other hand, are also essential but they are not ends in themselves.<sup>5</sup> They should be performed for the sake of the noble and the honourable. Technical and professional efficiency alone can never be the aim of education. During the eras of furious and hectic struggle for existence, the pragmatic-instrumentalistic and utilitarian conceptions of

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<sup>1</sup> *The Politics*, 1310 a/20.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, 1260 b/15.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, 1337 a/25.

<sup>4</sup> W. L. Newman, *The Politics of Aristotle*, Vol. I, p. 62.

<sup>5</sup> *The Politics*, 1333 b/1-5

education become emphasized but to Aristotle, enamoured of the leisurely life of the Greek aristocrat, such a conception of education would appear vulgar and brutalizing. He is an exponent of the ideal of liberal education.

Liberal education certainly results in mental cultivation and generates a spirit of intellectual quest. It leads to the destruction of intellectual inertia and languidness and produces the free-thinking and enquiring mind. Furthermore, it disciplines and chastens the feelings and sentiments.<sup>1</sup> Perhaps Aristotle would call this function of liberal education to be of the purgative type. It generates a sensitive reaction to the diverse situations in social life. Thus it facilitates the growth of a sense of social accommodation. It produces a sense of friendship, sympathy and liberality. Liberal education, as understood today, primarily signifies training in ethics, art and philosophy or humanities generally. It is considered as being different from technical and vocational education which are oriented only to professional competence. In the modern conception of liberal education, possibly, there may be an undercurrent of opposition even to advanced competence in the technical sciences. But according to the ancient schools of philosophic idealism, even science imparts a spiritual experience. To Plato, scientific understanding is a preparation for philosophic dialectical cognition. Aristotle's ideal of liberal education has many parallels. The Chinese stressed training of civil servants in the Confucian texts. The study of Greek and Roman classics was an essential part of the curriculum at the old British universities. In the U.S.A. today, we are noticing a revival of some forms of neo-Thomism. In Greece in the fifth and fourth and third centuries B.C. the ideal of the "cultured gentleman" was considered exemplary. An ancient Sanskrit stanza refers to the delight obtained from literature, music and art as the true human delight. By stressing liberal education, Aristotle has certainly drawn attention to the humanist dimensions of human culture, but today due to the exorbitant growth of economic competition and struggle for existence the ideal of education for earning

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. T. H. Huxley, *Liberal Education*.

and living is getting more attention. The Gandhian ideal of "basic education" is also emphatic on orienting education to be an aid in earning a living through the acquisition of skills but Aristotle in his detestation of manual labor would consider even this ideal to be illiberal.

Aristotle is vigorously opposed to the vulgar and mechanical arts and occupations.<sup>1</sup> Everything that deforms the body, he dismisses as vulgar. Anything that makes the mind or soul of the young man less fit for the exercise of virtue, he considers vulgar. Even paid employments he condemns as vulgar because they degrade the mind. Even those arts and occupations which are not illiberal as such, become illiberal, if instead of providing amateurish delight, they are pursued for the sake of professional skill and dexterity. According to Aristotle, the intention of man is important. Some things there are, which if done for one's own self, will not be vulgar but may become vulgar if they are done for payment or for others. Aristotle's hostility to the mechanization and brutalization of the mind is indicated by his trenchant opposition, at times, to the Lacedaemonian system of education because it put exorbitant and unhealthy emphasis only on the development of military courage and did not train the citizens in the arts of peace. Another indication of his opposition to vulgarization is in his condemnation of athleticism. He certainly wants the development of physical strength by gymnastic training but is opposed to mere athleticism acquired by the neglect of other virtues. It is in the interests of harmony and proportion that he is opposed to vulgarization. But there can be serious objection to his identification of vulgarization and specialization. Sometimes his statements appear superficial as, for example, when he says that the total amount of useful knowledge imparted to children should never be large enough to make them mechanically-minded. John Stuart Mill had a very bookish education in his childhood but he did not become mechanically-minded. Aristotle believed that there was some relation between liberal education and an amateurish interest in diverse activities. But this amateurish interest is an arist-

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<sup>1</sup> *The Politics*, 1337 b and 1336 b.

cratic ideal meant for the leisure class and is not possible to be practised in the modern world when fundamental equalization in all fields is considered to be the goal. Bertrand Russell is right in pointing out that the day of the "cultured gentleman", the aim of the Aristotelian state, is now over. Several factors are responsible for this decline of the cultured gentleman.<sup>1</sup> A democratic upheaval in modern times has strengthened the aspirations of the vast masses to share in the traditional cultural heritage, which has so far been the monopoly of the aristocracy. The growth of scientific industrial technics has brought to prominence means and methods not only different from but even alien to the traditional patterns of action. The advance of popular education has brought to the forefront a new public whose values and beliefs are highly critical of the aristocratic pretensions to cultural superiority. The ideal of the cultured gentleman, hence, although practicable in Periclean Athens and in Europe from the Renaissance to the eighteenth century, is, more or less, a decadent conception. But although the Aristotelian notion, behind his condemnation of professional and mechanical training, is impracticable and although his conception of the cultured gentleman is anachronistic, still we have to recognize that both in Greece and in ancient India a many-sided versatility was the aim of education.<sup>2</sup> In modern times, in the furious pursuit of an education for career, there is a tendency to neglect the training of character. Aristotle wanted a synthesis of the growth of moral character and intellectual instruction. Lotze points out some contrasting features of ancient and modern education. According to the classical conception, general aptitude for knowing was an end in itself and hence the free exercise of all the powers and an interest in human relations generally were stressed. Intellectual development and enjoyment was then considered an end in itself. According to the modern conception there is an emphasis on the range of concrete knowledge.<sup>3</sup> Today there

<sup>1</sup> B. Russell, *A History of Western Philosophy*, p. 194.

<sup>2</sup> W. L. Newman, *The Politics of Aristotle*, Vol. I, p. 343; and Sri Aurobindo, *The Brain of India*.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Lotze, *Mikrokosmos*, III, 254, referred to in Newman, *op. cit.*, p. 347.

is stress on productive specialized labor and professional efforts and both the work and its fruit are considered worthwhile.

Another significant element in Aristotle's sociology of education is his conception of the necessity of leisure.<sup>1</sup> Certainly there is an element of relaxation and recreation in leisure to the extent that it is removed from the drudgeries of the art of earning a living. But the essence of leisure is the creative employment of one's time. Political activity and intellectual contemplation are only possible when there is leisure. According to Aristotle, leisure is the goal of occupation. In order that the citizens may enjoy leisure they must be provided with enough means. The citizens of Aristotle's best state are well-to-do people but cultivation of land is to be put in charge of husbandmen who are either foreign perioeci or slaves. Hence Popper says that there is a strong element of a sound and balanced feudalism in the best state of Aristotle because the citizens have land but they themselves do not work upon it.<sup>2</sup> According to Aristotle courage and endurance are needed for business and action, philosophy or wisdom for leisure, and temperance and justice are needed for both action and leisure. Hence leisure and cultivation are promoted not only by those virtues which are practised in leisure, but also by some of those which are useful for business and action.

### 3. Aristotle's Theory of Education

According to Aristotle the citizen belongs to the state, hence for the production of healthy citizens he wants to control the marriage of the parents. He is against early marriage. Even in the ancient Vedic and Upanishadic philosophy there was a great stress on *Brahmacharya* as the foundation of physical and moral life. Aristotle wanted that the citizens should have strong bodies and hence he emphasized gymnastic exercises. He puts emphasis on moral education and he wanted that the directors of education should see that the young children do not hear any unseemly tale. The latter have to share, later on, in great and responsible work and hence they should have no

<sup>1</sup> *The Politics*, 1334 a/20.

<sup>2</sup> K. Popper, *The Open Society and Its Enemies*, Vol. II, p. 2.

knowledge of the evil. He says that children should not associate themselves with slaves and other people of questionable character. Until they are seven years old they should live at home. I agree with most of these proposals but in the framework of modern democracy we would say that these regulations should be imposed by families and not by the state. From the age of five to seven the children are to watch others at work, on those lessons which afterwards they will have to learn themselves. Aristotle's ideal is that boys should love and admire the good and feel a repugnance for the bad because he holds that virtue consists in rejoicing and loving and hating aright.<sup>1</sup> This conception of virtue may sound puritanical in modern times but it has significant similarities to the Hindu conception of education wherein moral discipline, *tapas*, is greatly stressed.

There are four subjects of instruction : reading and writing, gymnastic, drawing, and music. Reading and writing are useful for the pursuit of economic activities, for household management, for the performance of political actions and for the acquisition of knowledge. Aristotle favors gymnastic for making the bodies of the future citizens proportionate and well-formed and not for excessive physical strength. What is needed is not beastly ferocity but gentle lion-like courage.<sup>2</sup> Drawing is useful in making purchases and for appreciating the beauty of the human figure. This latter notion may sound a little over-aesthetic to us. Music, according to Aristotle, has five uses. It is a source of harmless pleasure. It provides recreation. Sometimes it has a purgative influence—*Katharsis*. It is also needed for forming characters because it habituates the mind to the love of that which is good and noble and to the repugnance for the ignoble. Thus it is clear that Aristotle stresses many more types of uses of music than Plato does in the second Book of the *Republic*. The fifth use of music is that of "intellectual enjoyment in leisure; which is in fact evidently the reason of its introduction, this being one of the ways in which it is thought that a free-man should pass his leisure ; as Homer says, 'But he

<sup>1</sup> W. L. Newman, *The Politics of Aristotle*, I, pp. 349-50.

<sup>2</sup> *The Politics*, 1338 b/18-20 : "For among barbarians and among animals courage is found associated, not with the greatest ferocity, but with a gentle and lion-like temper."

who alone should be called to the pleasant feast' and afterwards he speaks of others whom he describes as inviting 'The bard who would delight them all.' And in another place Odysseus says that there is no better way of passing life than when men's hearts are merry and 'The banqueters in the hall, sitting in order, hear the voice of the minstrel'.<sup>1</sup> Since Aristotle talks of the rhythms and the melodies it is clear that he does not mean by music, literature, but is speaking of music in the ordinary sense. He is opposed to professional competence in music. He only wants an amateurish understanding of music. He is for avoiding enervating and passion-exciting music. He is also opposed to the music that would degrade the body or make it unfit for participating in the civil or military training and functions. According to Aristotle, "the mean, the possible and the becoming"<sup>2</sup> are the three principles of musical education and on their basis he praises the Lydian harmony which is suited to children of tender years and the Dorian harmony which produces gravity of character and is the manliest.<sup>3</sup> In ancient India, although some of the gods and goddesses like Siva, Krishna and Sarasvati are represented as having their musical instruments, musical education was never considered an integral constituent of the regular educational curriculum. Sometimes it is possible to appreciate the view that music can contribute to the formation of good habits but its connexion with rational growth, as upheld by Aristotle, does not seem at all clear and plausible.

#### 4. Critique of Aristotle's Philosophy of Education

There are some differences between the Platonic and the Aristotelian ideals of education. Plato advocates the cultivation

<sup>1</sup> *Politics*, VIII, 3.

<sup>2</sup> *The Politics*, 1342 b/30.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, 1342 b and 1340 b.

Aristotle's views on the effects of melodies can be thus represented :

- (i) Mixolydian = make men sad and grave.
- (ii) Relaxed modes = enfeeble the mind.
- (iii) Dorian = produces a moderate and settled temper.
- (iv) Phrygian = inspires enthusiasm.

of reason and philosophical dialectics. Aristotle too advocates the growth of reason but is also mindful of the importance of moral habituation. Plato gives an elaborate account of the higher education in the sciences and philosophies for the guardians. Aristotle is silent about these but it can be guessed that possibly he would have included logic, rhetoric, astronomy, physics, biology, metaphysics, politics and ethics, among the subjects of higher education since on these subjects he has written important books.<sup>1</sup> Generally speaking, Aristotle is more mindful of the synthesis of knowledge and happiness, while Plato stresses only knowledge.

Aristotle's philosophy of education has several merits. It indicates a comprehensive conception of political philosophy. An integral relation between life and state is essential ; according to it. In a growing secularistic and scientific-technological-commercial civilization, there is a tendency to become oblivious of the problems of philosophy of life. But Aristotle is right in pointing out that without a noble conception of life aiming at good and justice, political activity is not oriented to the right direction.

Aristotle is also justified in emphasizing "habituation" for the practice of moral virtues. Certainly we need sound, noble and decent men for the conduct of governmental affairs. Virtuous activity and felicity are the goals both of the individuals and the state. Hence we think that Aristotle's stress on truth, justice, courage, temperance, liberality etc. in the political context is meaningful.

Aristotle advocated the necessity of leisure (*schole*) although, in his conception, it is the privilege of an economically parasitical class. In modern industrial legislation we find a strict definition of the number of hours a worker is to work for, in order that the division between labor-time and leisure-time may be maintained. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948 also recognizes the enjoyment of art and culture as a basic human right. Hence increasingly we are recognizing the relation between the advance of civilization and culture, and leisure.

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<sup>1</sup> Monroe, *A Brief History of Education*, p. 71.

Some of the details of Aristotle's theory of education may still be plausible. We may sympathize with his view that music has an educative and a purgative purpose. Mahatma Gandhi also recognized the morally elevating influence of religious prayers and the chants of the *Upanishads* and the *Bhagavadgita*. Aristotle's views with regard to gymnastic training for boys are also sound and may still be put into practice. His attempt to regulate the age of marriage is also sound. His proposals to teach and train the boys moral virtues, especially temperance, can also be accepted.

Aristotle's emphasis on liberal arts and the consequent opposition to the vulgarization and brutalization of human propensities is in line with the modern humanistic approach to education. The necessity of the study of humanities is now being recognized even for people undergoing vocational training and also for realizing the significance of human relations in industry. The ancient curriculum of education both in India and Greece was more encyclopaedic but in modern times there is a far greater stress on specialized competence in limited fields. But it will be better if to the modern conception of specialized expert training we add the insight of the ancient thinkers, into education for the growth of man and not merely as an adjunct to bread-winning.

There are also some great limitations of and inadequacies in Aristotle's conception of education. It is difficult to sympathize with some of his ethical and political prejudices. According to his notions, the body is for the sake of the soul, the irrational part of the soul is for the rational part, animals are for men, and slaves and mechanics are for citizens. From the standpoint of the lower in the social hierarchy, like the artisans, mechanics, merchants and husbandmen, this principle may degenerate into a dangerous principle of social oppression and tyranny. No philosophic conception of the organic whole or the distinction between the 'constituent' parts and the 'conditions' of a *polis* can justify any social oppression and tyranny.

It is surprising that Aristotle should not discuss higher education in the *Politics*. It is possible to form a hypothetical picture of what would have been the subjects of higher education from the extant treatises of Aristotle himself on philosophical

and scientific subjects but still we are justified in expecting from Aristotle a detailed and connected treatment of higher education in the *Politics*. In view of his promise at the beginning of Book III to investigate the relations of life and the state, this neglect of higher philosophic education and its connexion with the state is a glaring omission.

Aristotle pleads for one, uniform, public education for all citizens<sup>1</sup> but such a proposal sounds totalitarian and is opposed to modern democratic trends. The Roman Catholic Church and other religious groups and denominations are opposed to such proposal for compulsory uniformity. If we would plead for uniformity, then we cannot simultaneously have in our country the European pattern of higher university education, the old Vedic system of Gurukula and the synthetic ideals and practices of the Santiniketan. Hence I am strongly opposed to any proposal for the total governmentalization of the educational machinery because the conception of the moulding of citizens in the spirit of the constitution may become a prelude to fascism.

Aristotle was himself an expert in many subjects. He was a master of many sciences and many branches of philosophies upto the extent that they had developed in contemporary Greece. Hence his stress on an aristocratic ideal of amateurishness and his fear of professional education seem paradoxical. From this standpoint there is more of harmony between the educational preachings of Plato and the style of his own personal accomplishments in life.

Aristotle's advocacy of the exposure of infants sounds crude and cruel. He says : "As to the exposure and rearing of children, let there be a law that no *deformed* child shall live but that on the ground of an *excess* in the number of children."<sup>2</sup> From this it appears that he had no conception of the human soul as a spiritual agent.

Aristotle also makes some proposals for the existence of a priestly class in his best state. He says : "No husbandmen or mechanic should be appointed to it (priesthood) ; for the Gods

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<sup>1</sup> Aristotle holds that citizen should be moulded to suit the form of government under which he lives because the citizen does not belong to himself "for they all belong to the state, and are each of them a part of the state." *The Politics*, 1337a/15-30.

<sup>2</sup> *The Politics*, 1335 b/20-25.

should receive honour from the citizens only. Now, since the body of the citizens is divided into two classes, the warriors and the councillors, and it is becoming that the worship of the Gods should be duly performed, and also a rest provided in their services for those who from age have given up active life, to the old men of these two classes should be assigned the duties of the priesthood."<sup>1</sup> But, although, thus almost all old citizens are supposed to end their lives as priests, there is no mention of any philosophy of religion in the *Politics*. There is no mention of the principles or of the dogmas of any religion in the *Politics*, as we find in the *Laws* of Plato and the *Social Contract* of Rousseau. Sometimes it seems surprising that the entire topic of religion and its relations with politics should have been left untouched in the *Politics*, except for a casual mention in a line here and there. The historical influence of Buddhism, Christianity and some other ethical-religious systems has made us aware of the primacy of religious values. The Greeks cared for aesthetics but were not a deeply religious people like the Jews and the Hindus. A comprehensive philosophy of education will also have to clarify this fundamental problem of the relationship between religion, politics and education. But inspite of this and other inadequacies credit should be given to Aristotle for having elaborately discussed the problem of education and its connexion with the state.

The Greek insistence on the organic connexion between politics and education was a function of their conception of *paideia* or culture. Culture is an integral element in the life of the best state. It is equated with a general training and development of the human faculties. Aristotle was quite right in stressing that culture and goodness should have the justest claim in the award of honours and office. But although he praises the Spartan practice of educating the sons of the poor and the rich together, still he had definite aristocratic prejudices since he held that "birth and education are commonly the accompaniments of wealth." I believe that if we can make the concrete realization of the ideal of 'education for culture' possible for all citizens, then it will be a fundamental landmark in the evolutionary progression of humanity.

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<sup>1</sup> *Politics*, VII, 9.

## *Educational Ideas and Activities of Lokamanya Tilak*

### **i. The Poona New English School**

Enlightenment of the people is one of the most important techniques of the rise of a nation. In Europe the rationalistic enlightenment of France preceded the French Revolution and Diderot, Voltaire and Rousseau are regarded as the intellectual precursors of the great revolutionary movement. Disraeli stressed the necessity of education for the success of the British democracy. In modern India we find that the rise and growth of nationalism has been associated with the spread of educational institutions organized on nationalistic lines. Chiploonkar and Tilak and Agarkar were the pioneers of a new educational movement in Maharashtra. Lala Lajpat Rai and Hansraj were the pioneers and leaders in the foundation of the D.A.V. College in Lahore. Swami Shraddhananda established the Gurukul at Kangri on the ideals of Vedic Brahmacharya. During the days of the Swadeshi movement (1905 to 1910) many new educational institutions were established. When the Non-cooperation movement started in India, several Vidya-pithas were established under Gandhiji's leadership. In the Santiniketan of Tagore we find the ideal of synthetic cosmopolitanism. In the growth of Indian renaissance and nationalism these various educational institutions have a large contributing share.

While Tilak (1856-1920) was studying for his law examination and was residing in Poona, he formulated a plan for the establishment of a private school.<sup>1</sup> The governing principle of

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<sup>1</sup> For the details of Tilak's life, N.C. Kelkar's *Life of Tilak* (in Marathi, 3 Vols.) and Bapat's *Anecdotes and Reminiscences of Tilak* (in Marathi, 3 Vols.) are to be consulted.

the teachers of this school was to be self-abnegation, so much associated with educational institutions run by the Jesuits. Tilak and Agarkar wanted to be 'Indian Jesuits'. At about this time Chiploonkar had resigned his post in the education department of the government and was thinking of running a school on independent lines. He did not think it worthwhile to manage a school already established by somebody else because at such a place he would not have opportunities for initiative and independence. Hence he decided to establish a new institution of his own. Tilak and Agarkar had already formulated their plans. They heard of the plans of Vishnushastry Chiploonkar (1850-82). The latter had already acquired fame as a writer of great force and power and it was advantageous to obtain the cooperation of such a man. Tilak and Agarkar met Chiploonkar at his house. They did not appreciate the idea of refashioning any old existing school in accordance with their ideals. They repudiated the suggestion to revive the institution of Baba Gokhale which had been defunct since 1876. At this meeting in September 1879, at the house of Chiploonkar the idea of establishing the New English School definitely took shape. Only the execution of the idea in concrete actuality remained to be done. On September 13, 1879 Chiploonkar wrote a letter to his younger brother, L. K. Chiploonkar, wherein he stated : "The memorable first day of October is approaching. I shall enjoy the pleasure of kicking off the chains (of government service) that day. Mr. Agarkar (going for M.A.), Mr. Tilak (going for LL.B.), Mr. Bhagwat and Mr. Karandikar have agreed to join me in my enterprise. This they have done of their own accord. We have settled the first of January for unfurling the new flag. Such a battery must carry the High School instantaneously before it."

On January 2, 1880 the Poona New English School was formally established. The main figures in this educational project had been Chiploonkar and Tilak. The latter also got the cooperation of a man who was specially expert in the field of management—although not an intellectual, M. B. Nanjoshi was clever in the ways of the world. Agarkar did not join the school in the beginning because he had to get the M.A. degree. In June 1880 V. S. Apte joined this group. Apte who later

acquired great fame as a profound Sanskrit scholar and lexicographer had already acquired scholastic distinctions. After getting the M.A. degree, in December 1880 Agarkar joined the School. Thus Chiploonkar, Tilak, Namjoshi, Apte and Agarkar became the leaders of a new educational transformation in Poona. They were aided in their enterprise by Vasudeva Shastri Khare, H. K. Damle, Krishnarao Mande etc. The last of this group (Mande) had also some journalistic experience to his credit. Vishnushastry was the head master of the school for some time. Vasudeorao Kelkar and Gole joined the school in 1883.

Originally the school was started as a purely private enterprise. Chiploonkar and Tilak were proud of its financial independence. They left an example in self-abnegation by not accepting any salary from the school in the first year of its existence. But inspite of the spirit of self-sacrifice shown by the founders, when the number of students increased and when, correspondingly, facilities had to be expanded, government aid was accepted. Originally the school taught only upto the seventh class. Later teaching began to be imparted upto the matriculation standard. In 1880 the school was started only with nineteen students. In 1884 there were 1009 students on its rolls. In that year 81% of the students came out successful in the matriculation examination.

But due to the ill luck of the school Vishnushastry Chiploonkar died on March 17, 1882. Thus he could devote his energies for the betterment of the school only for two years and a quarter. His death was a great blow to the infant institution. Chiploonkar was a man of great erudition and burning political idealism. He was opposed to the degradation of the pedagogical art. He felt that the great teachers of Pericles, Alcibiades and Alexander were the real makers of ancient Greek civilization. Did not Shivaji owe his greatness to the inspired teachings of Ramdas? Chiploonkar's scholarship and idealism sometimes stood in the way of his being the good teacher for the average student. But although he did not conform to the exact requirements of the examination criteria, still his intellectual personality was a great asset to the school. His was a great moral force.

The school, however, progressed under the guidance of

Tilak, Apte and Agarkar. Agarkar had very interesting ways of teaching. Apte was a scholar and a great disciplinarian. While teaching the boys he always kept in mind the requirements of the syllabus prescribed for the examination. On September 9, 1882 Apte appeared before the Hunter Committee and in course of his statement, he said : "We have undertaken this work of popular education with the firmest conviction and belief that, of all agents of human civilization, education is the only one that brings about material, moral and religious regeneration of fallen countries and raises them upto the level of most advanced nations by slow and peaceful revolutions ; and in order that this should be so, it must be ultimately in the hands of the people themselves." Although he (Apte) did not have the same spirit of self-sacrifice as Tilak and Agarkar, still he was a great figure in the school and was responsible for the introduction of routine, regularity and general order in its operation and management.

As a teacher, Tilak inspired awe and admiration. He created a prodigious spectacle at times by solving mathematical problems without the help of the black-board. The students had confidence in his erudition. Although he did not digress from the subject-matter, unlike Chiploonkar, still, he would not care to examine the note-books of the students specifically and thoroughly. Perhaps he wanted the boys to develop self-reliance.

The Poona New English School was a great success and soon it caught the attention not only of Poona but of Maharashtra. Dr. Hunter, the president of the Education Commission (1882) stated, on September 8 : "Throughout the whole of India I have not yet witnessed a single institution which can be compared with this establishment. . . . This institution can rival and compete with success not only with government high schools in the country, but may favourably compare with the schools of other countries also."<sup>1</sup> Even the Bombay government also at one time expressed a desire to transfer the Deccan college to the control of the Deccan Education Society which was established in 1884 by the same pioneers who founded the Poona New English School. There were

<sup>1</sup> This statement was made by Hunter while he was replying to an address of welcome by the Poona-New English School.

several factors responsible for the success of the New School. The most important factor was that a band of scholarly arid enthusiastic young men were ready to undergo personal sacrifice for the sake of realizing the noble mission of spreading education amongst their countrymen. Tilak and Chiploonkar thought in terms of great practical idealism when they wanted the extension of educational opportunities for the sake of national regeneration and political fulfilment. The pioneer group of Chiploonkar, Tilak and Agarkar had been fortunate in obtaining the help and willing cooperation of a group of other youngmen who also were responsible persons and devoted to their duties. In 1881 the *Kesari* and the *Mahratta* were established by this group and thus they obtained wide publicity. These newspapers facilitated the public recognition of the educational work on which this group had embarked. In 1882 Tilak and Agarkar were sentenced to four months' simple imprisonment in the Kolhapur Defamation Case. Because they had suffered imprisonment for vindicating the cause of right against the injustice and oppressiveness of an autocratic chief minister of the Kolhapur State, hence a halo of martyrdom was now attached to their names and personality after their release on October 26, 1882. Hitherto they were praised as courageous heroes, now was added to that an additional element of respect and esteem.

The New English School was inspired by a new philosophy which was different from the professions and practices of the important educational institutions of the day. Tilak's ideal was twofold. Along with Chiploonkar and Agarkar he thought it essential that education had to be cheapened and teachers had to recover some of that old idealism which had been prevalent in the ancient history of this country. The great teachers and preceptors of the Vedic and Upanishadic periods were renowned not for opulence and mundane prosperity but for scholarship, integrity and devotion to duty. The re-incorporation of that old ideal in modern educational institutions was essential for the regeneration of the motherland. Tilak's second ideal was to spread education. The extension of educational opportunities was the indispensable condition for political enlightenment and progress. Hence the spread of

education was uppermost in Tilak's eyes. During the Swadeshi agitation days (1905 to 1908) he began to stress the nationalistic implications of education. But during the eighties of the last century, Chiploonkar, Tilak and Agarkar were content with stressing only the progressive expansion of the education which could be had in those days under the existing political framework. Hence this group of young educational leaders also accepted government grants for the development of educational facilities.

It is significant that both Lokamanya Tilak and Swami Shraddhananda should begin their public career as educators. But while Shraddhananda was influenced by the ideals of Brahmacharya as inculcated in the Vedas, Tilak accepted the synthesis of Eastern ideals and Western practices and institutions. The latter's revivalism did not go to the extent of accepting the possibility of the total incorporation of ancient ideas and theories in modern times. Throughout his life Tilak accepted the value of English education in the generation of sentiments of political radicalism and progressivism. Even during the Home Rule days (1916-1918) when he toured the country as the mighty prophet of Swaraj, he was candid enough to confess that the English system of education had been a factor for political enlightenment in the country. To this extent his spirit is different from that of Mahatma Gandhi. The Mahatma, especially in the *Hind Swaraj*, appears as a devastating critic of Western civilization. During the Non-cooperation days (1920-1922) Gandhi spoke in terms of unmeasured denunciation of the English education. Tilak's spirit and ideas were more realistic. Although a profound scholar of the Vedas and the different systems of Hindi philosophy, he (Tilak) recognized that the English education had to make contributions to the growth of the Indian body politic. Hence it is, that for about a decade, since the beginning of his public career, Tilak worked as a school teacher and a college professor. But already as a teacher of students he had started on that wider project—"education for the masses"—and hence along with his role as an educator, he assumed another role, the role of a journalist.

## **2. The Deccan Education Society and the Fergusson College**

The foundation of the Deccan Education Society is an epoch-making event in the educational history of Maharashtra. It put forward exalted ideals of service and sacrifice before the people. Since the opening of the New English School the young group of enthusiastic youngmen wanted to expand and extend the educational enterprise in which they had engaged themselves. The Kolhapur case (1882) had given an additional lustre to Tilak and Agarkar and their words began to carry weight. The Kolhapur Darbar recognized their (Tilak and Agarkar's) chivalry and self-sacrifice because they had stood for the interest of the court of Shivaji Maharaj's descendants. Hence when the Deccan Education Society wanted to establish a college the Kolhapur Darbar donated a large sum of money. So great had the attachment between the Society and the Darbar grown that in 1895 the opening ceremony of the newly constructed Fergusson College buildings was performed by the Maharaja of Kolhapur.

Tilak played a notable part in the foundation of the Deccan Education Society. According to Zacharias, the inspiration and spiritual leadership of Ranade was also a factor in the establishment of the society. On October 24, 1884, the Deccan Education Society was formally established. A meeting was held in Poona under the presidentship of Sir William Wedderburn who later acquired great fame for his activities in the Indian National Congress and also became a member of the British Parliament. Tilak proposed the resolution for electing a board of managers for the Society. The board was to consist of eminent persons like Sir William Wedderburn, Rao Saheb Mandalik, Professor Wordsworth (a grandson of the famous British poet, and a man greatly recognized for his learning and character) and Mr. Telang. Tilak's important role in instituting this society should be recognized. Dr. R. G. Bhandarkar, at this meeting, made distinct mention of Tilak's initiative and bold action. The Society enriched itself by obtaining the services of V. B. Kelkar, Dharap and M. S. Gole. In 1884, Gopal Krishna Gokhale joined the Poona New English School as a teacher and he also became a member of the Society.

Since 1885 he also began to teach in the Fergusson College. It is pleasant to remember that the great Gopal Krishna Gokhale, whom Mahatma Gandhi regarded as his political *guru*, was attracted to the cause of educational activities involving personal self-sacrifice by the glamour of Tilak's personality. It is true that as time passed the influences of Agarkar and Ranade, and especially of the latter, became more prominent in the case of Gokhale, but nonetheless it was Tilak who was at least partly responsible for introducing him (Gokhale) to the path of a public career.

The Deccan Education Society placed before its members ideals of noble self-sacrifice. The members of the Society bound themselves to serve it for twenty years. They had to be contented with a meagre amount of money which could only meet the bare needs of subsistence. In the beginning it was only rupees forty and was later raised to seventy-five. The Society later on began to manage several educational institutions but its two most important creations are the Fergusson College at Poona and the Willingdon College at Sangli. Lala Lajpat Rai has recognized the influence of the ideals of self-abnegation governing the Deccan Education Society upon the people who were important in the establishment and management of the D. A. V. College, Lahore. He says that the scheme of life-membership was taken from the Deccan Education Society, although contrasted with the latter, the D. A. V. College people did not accept grants from the government or from any agency associated with the government. Thus it is clear that the seven persons responsible for the foundation of the Deccan Education Society—B. G. Tilak, V. S. Aptc, G. G. Agarkar, V. B. Kelkar, Nanjoshi, Gole and Dharap—proved to be pioneers not only in Maharashtra but their ideals spread into other parts of India also.

On January 2, 1885, the Fergusson College was established. On March 5, 1885 the foundation-stone of the building was laid by Sir James Fergusson, the governor of Bombay presidency. Later on, the site of the college buildings was shifted and hence the foundation-stone had to be transferred. This time Lord Harris the governor laid the foundation. In 1892 the college became a first-grade college. Since its inception the Deccan

Education Society desired to extend the scope of its activities and soon it began to purchase new sites and new buildings for its institutions. Tilak had taken great pains for securing the Gadre Wada for the Fergusson College. The latter (the Fergusson College) was the most precious amongst the achievements of the members of the Deccan Education Society and in the noble process of the realization of its goals, Tilak's pioneer efforts must be recognized. It was because of the recognition of the services of Tilak and Agarkar that the Maharaja of Kolhapur made very large grants to the college. Other Maratha Chiefs and Princes were also attracted to the College partly because it was associated with the pioneer enthusiasts and heroic workers of Poona.

During the decade of his life spent as a teacher and professor (1880 to 1890), Tilak made solid and substantial studies. He held the permanent chair of mathematics in the Fergusson College. Mathematics was a subject of his heart and he once expressed the desire that after India obtained Swaraj he would spend his time in studies of and researches in mathematics. Occasionally Tilak also used to teach Sanskrit at the Fergusson College. The fact that in 1893 he was able to produce a monumental book like the *Orion* is evidence of the fact that he must have done serious studies in the field of mathematics, astronomy and Vedic literature. For five years Tilak taught mathematics and this left a lasting influence on his life and his method of writing is logical, precise and direct. As the occasional teacher of Sanskrit he used to teach *Meghadutam* and the *Nitisatakam* of Bhartrihari. The latter was his favorite writer and often in his articles published in the *Kesari* we find quotations from Bhartrihari. As a professor, the teaching work of Tilak was characterised by depth and thoroughness. Like Swami Ramtirtha, Tilak also had the reputation, since his student days, of being able to solve mathematical problems which would prove difficult even for the professors. Tilak's powers of application and deep concentration were remarkable and his personality left an abiding influence on the minds of his students. He was eminently and remarkably fitted to be a research scholar and thinker. He did become a scholar and a philosopher of international reputation but his energies were for the most part devoted to the

supreme vocation of his life—the political salvation of the Indian people. Certain events occurred which led to a rift among the members of the Deccan Education Society and Tilak left the life of quiet meditation of scholarly recluse and embarked on the career of a politician. Hence it is essential to find out the chain of the causes leading to the schism in the Deccan Education Society.

### **3. Tilak's Resignation from the Deccan Education Society**

The aim of Tilak and his colleagues since the inception of the Poona New English School had been "to make liberal education indigenous." This involved the practice of the ideals of self-abnegation and total concentration upon educational activities. Like the Jesuits, Tilak and his colleagues were committed to utter devotion to their duty and were determined not to engage in any other lucrative and time-consuming job. Tilak was a man of strong convictions and when he found that the original ideals which guided the formation of the Deccan Education Society were being transgressed, he decided to break with his colleagues. In his famous Resignation letter he has outlined three periods of his educational activity. From 1880 to 1882 was the formative period and from 1883 to 1885 was the period of organization. The members kept themselves bound to the ideals of the Society during these two periods. From 1885 to 1890 was the third period, so far at least as Tilak was concerned. During this period the seeds of disruption sprouted and hence on the 14th October, 1890 he submitted his resignation and wrote a note as follows :

"Poona, 14th October, 1890

My dear Colleagues,

From the vote that has been passed against me now, I do not think I could be true to myself and the Body at the same time. I may hereafter send you a detailed statement of my reasons to withdraw from the Body. But in the meanwhile you will please accept this resignation of my duties as a life-member of the Body. Thanking you for the courtesy you have shown me hitherto,

I remain,  
Yours sincerely,  
Bal Gangadhar Tilak"

As a matter of fact, although the formal resignation was tendered only in 1890, Tilak had taken leave from the Society in 1889. In a sense this was the prelude to his retirement. On December 15, 1890 came the formal resignation of Tilak. On February 2, 1891, Mr. Selby moved a resolution and on the basis of that the Council of the Society passed a resolution condemning Tilak's charge of dishonesty against the members of the Society. On February 19, Tilak wrote a rejoinder. The Council met and confirmed its previous resolution. The rupture between Tilak and the Deccan Education Society was thus finally and irrevocably executed.

The assessment of the factors that led to the resignation of Tilak from the Deccan Education Society is a painful process. Agarkar and Gokhale have put the blame on Tilak. R. P. Paranjpey has ventured a psychological explanation. He thinks that because Tilak was a masterful personality he could not work with an equal. He says that Tilak found that in Gokhale he was going to have a formidable rival. Athalye has controverted Paranjpey's thesis on the ground that in 1888-1889 Gokhale was at best a brilliant graduate and hence was, as yet, not a possible rival for Tilak.<sup>1</sup> There may be truth in Athalye's point of view, although the Gokhale of 1888-1889 was already becoming a major factor in the social reform school. Paranjpey's second psychological explanation is that Tilak did not realize that two persons could differ on some points while agreeing on many others. But this argument is equally applicable to the other side. My own impression is that Paranjpey's explanation is one-sided and unfair to Tilak. However, it remains true that behind ideological struggle there lay concealed fundamental disparity in temperamental adjustment. It is a fact that amongst the members of the Society there was a deep personal antagonism and towards the end it had gone to the extent that some of the members even would not speak to one another. Further, while personal grievances were accumulating and tensions were growing, there was no stabilizing agency to provide a harmony of relations.

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<sup>1</sup> D. N. Athalye, *The Life of Lokamanya Tilak* (Poona, Swadeshi Publishing Co., 1921), pp. 42-44.

There were certain fundamental factors leading to Tilak's resignation. Tilak wanted the members to concentrate on academic work. While they were managing only a high school it was possible to do some outside work also. But when a college had been established it demanded complete academic concentration and absorption. Any acceptance of and performance of outside work would involve eventual lowering of academic standards. Tilak had very high ideals of scholastic achievements and he wanted the lecturers in the college to be not mere office-workers but sound masters of their specific intellectual disciplines. Hence when Gopal Krishna Gokhale was made the secretary of the Sarvajanik Sabha, Tilak did not look upon it with favour. It was not a question of personal jealousy and animosity at all. The latter was right in holding that the members of the Deccan Education Society should not accept non-academic jobs. Some of the members pointed out that by accepting Congress work in 1889, Tilak himself had violated this principle. Tilak himself has replied to this charge in his resignation letter. He says :

"The Congress work was undertaken by me when I was on leave, and was thinking of resigning the Body. It is true that I rejoined in 1889, and did not give up the work undertaken before. But that was because I did not regard the settlement as final, and again because the work was of a temporary nature. Those that have ventured to bring this charge against me, entirely forget the fact that I did not take up any Congress work in previous years, though it had long been in existence. Neither did I do any outside work during the first 9 years of the school, though when the school was started in 1880, it was entirely in my hands to fix morning hours for tuition, and leave the afternoon for pleading work. As regards the Press work, originally it was the work of all, and when it ceased to be so, I was expressly allowed to connect myself with it. But even then I did little for the Press, except giving general advice. I might also add that while I was on leave, a gentleman came to me, to ascertain, if I could accept the secretaryship of the Sarvajanik Sabha but I declined to do so on the ground that I had not then given up for good my connection with the school. However, I told him that as regards the Congress I could do the work as it was of a temporary character. The same may be said of the work I did for my friends, the dismissed Mamlatdars. Knowing these factors

as well myself, if you are still pleased to prefer the charge against me, I must simply consider myself to be singularly unfortunate in being so rewarded for my disinterested labour.”

Tilak was a firm believer in the theory of total consecration to the work of the Society. He upheld that if any member of the Society obtained some additional income or remuneration it became the joint property of the Society and individual ownership of it should be renounced. He adhered to the ideals of the Jesuits and even the members of the Deccan Education Society called themselves “Indian Jesuits”. Jesuitism implied, in this context, the non-acceptance of lucrative appointments or any money-fetching job outside the school and the college. However, if any additional amount would be earned, it had to be made over to the treasury of the Society.

The Deccan Education Society guaranteed to its life-members a maintenance allowance and the life of every member was insured for rupees three thousand. Moreover, special gratuities were to be provided if necessity arose. The financial aspect was also one of the factors leading to the split. Tilak writes :

“Nor could I approve of any attempt to change the principles of the Body, or stifle discussion by the help of technicality. I therefore, wrote to the secretary of the Managing Board on 23rd February 1887 stating that under the tension of feeling then existing, and attempts then made to subvert the principles, I could not devote my heart to my work ; and that the questions should be immediately decided by the Board. Upon this several confidential meetings were held, but with no definite decision on the main questions at issue. Thus the main cause of difference was left undecided only to produce rancour and bitterness. There was before the Board a compromise, and a reasonable one too, regarding the pay question, it being proposed that the question of raising salary (greater than Rs. 75 p.m.) should not be taken up until there was a clear balance of Rs. 35,000, and that the salary should never exceed Rs. 100 per mensem. But even upon this we could not come to a settlement, and the meeting of the Board called for discussion of the proposal, dispersed without arriving at conclusion. Mr. Gokhale even went so far as to declare that in his opinion, it was not desirable to tie down our hands in this way.....Mr. Agarkar was not prepared to look to the convenience of his

colleagues, either by gratuities or loans at this time, whether from a desire to oppose me or to alter the old principles, I do not say. A year after, Mr. Gokhale was in need of a loan, and it is really curious to see that Mr. Agarkar, who had previously voted against a loan to Mr. Namjoshi, proposed to loan himself; and fearing opposition, seconded the proposition to make Mr. Gokhale's case an exception to the rules passed on 3rd April 1886, that no loan should be advanced without a unanimous consent of all—a rule passed on the demand of Mr. Agarkar himself."

Tilak wanted to stick to the old principles of self-sacrifice and self-abnegation. But some of the members were thinking of and also trying to use the opportunities provided by the society as a mere convenient start in life. Hence they were not serious in maintaining the sanctity of the old governing principles.

A few minor causes of conflict only served to intensify the antagonism. Tilak writes : "On 3rd February 1888 a resolution was passed that if any special book be required for the school, it would be prepared by open competition, and its copyright be purchased by the Managing Board. The first case that came for consideration afterwards was, however, decided on a contrary principle. Mr. Gokhale, who was given Arithmetic of Standard VII for one year, soon discovered that a book was wanting for Indian students ; and the Board resolved to make it (Gokhale's *Arithmetic* which was published in December 1888) a text-book for 1889, on the 26th June 1888, before it was published."

Thus the scene was being gradually prepared for the final split. Agarkar even made charges against Tilak's fundamental motivation. He went to the length of saying that under the pretence of stoic self-resignation and divine disinterestedness Tilak had always aimed at self-assertion and self-glorification. Tilak's diagnosis of the situation was that Agarkar had failed to obtain the required majority for getting certain measures passed because of Tilak's opposition. Hence "disappointment produced bitterness, bitterness grew into jealousy and jealousy into rancour as might be seen from his letters to me, written at the time of the discussion."

Tilak's resignation from the Society was thus the climax of

the operation of a long concatenation of factors. The factors responsible for this split we have analyzed but it may be hazarded that perhaps the logic of the split lay in the fundamental metaphysical assumptions of the two groups. Tilak was a believer in the primacy of spiritual teleology and was a man of action. Agarkar and the principal persons allied with him were rationalists and to some extent even agnostics and were believers in westernizing tendencies. After 1890 these metaphysical differences and their social implications revealed themselves with increasing vehemence and consequently the social and political antagonism was becoming more bitter.

Tilak's resignation was a great loss to the Deccan Education Society. It lost a man of his dynamic and puissant personality. He was a scholar and a sincere teacher. It is true that even after the resignation, he continued his scholastic endeavours with unabated vigour and speed but nevertheless the deprivation of the opportunity to mould the moral and intellectual opinions of the youngmen at the Fergusson College was a great loss to the college and to Maharashtra. But looked at from a more comprehensive standpoint perhaps it was also a blessing in disguise. It is true that if Tilak had remained confined to the precincts of the college he could have given some additional volumes of excellence and depth of the *Orion* or the *Gita Rahasya*. But the nation's need at the moment was imperative. Not quiet contemplation and inward meditation but restless and ceaseless endeavour for the emancipation of the motherland was to be Tilak's offering in the mighty *Tajna* of the resurgence of India. Hence from 1890 Tilak embarked upon an independent political and journalistic career. But it is not far-fetched to imagine that the habit of prolonged study which was responsible for the creation of a book like the *Gita Rahasya* must have been formed during the period when he was a school teacher and a college professor. After a lapse of about fifteen years, since 1905 he once more began to concentrate energies on educational work.

#### **4. National Education during the Swadeshi period**

Both Tilak and Surendranath Banerjea wanted students to join the Swadeshi movement. But the government of India replied by issuing the Risley Circular on May 6, 1907. It

ordained that if students associated themselves with political movements, grants-in-aid to their schools should be withdrawn. School teachers were warned against expressing political views. College students could attend political meetings but if they became active in politics, the affiliation of the college could be withdrawn. Professors were forbidden from encouraging students to attend political meetings and if they did so, the government could intervene. But the more the government tried to take recourse to coercion, the more the movement of national education grew up in Bengal and Maharashtra. Within less than a year, about 10,000 students got enrolled in the national schools and colleges in Bengal. Rash Behari Ghosh and Gurudas Banerjea as also Aurobindo Ghosh took very prominent part in the new nationally-oriented educational activities in Bengal. Under the guidance and patronage of Tilak, "Shri Samartha Vidyalaya" was established at Talegaon. The Maharashtra Vidya Prasarak Mandal began the collection of subscriptions in the 25 Marathi-speaking districts of Western India. Dr. Deshmukh, Tilak, R. S. Vaidya, Prof. Vijapurkar, Joshi and other gentlemen devoted considerable energy to the collection of funds. The Samartha Vidyalaya, established after the name of the great preceptor of Shivaji—the hero-saint Sri Samartha Ramdas—did pioneer work in the field of national education. But in 1910 it was suppressed by the government. British historians and critics like Roberts, Powell-Price and others have criticized Tilak for encouraging students to take part in political agitation. Tilak never wanted the students to give up their schools and colleges but he insisted that because the holy work of national emancipation had been set on foot hence it was necessary that the enthusiasm of youth should also be consecrated to the service of the motherland.

On February 27, 1908 Tilak delivered a speech on national education at Sholapur at a meeting held under the presidentship of Dr. Deshmukh. He stated that Samartha Ramdas inaugurated the movement of national education in Maharashtra. Twelve hundred pupils of the great preceptor spread themselves all over Maharashtra for educating the masses. Tilak condemned the existing system of English education because it sadly neglected religious education. "After twenty years

rotting in their system, one has to look elsewhere for religious study. Men who develop the idea that religion is a farce all along their educational course are afterwards found to be wanting in any conception of Duty."

He also delivered a speech on national education at Barsi. He outlined four factors which are indispensable for constituting a system of national education. Tilak put the first and foremost importance on religious education for building character. He said : "Secular education only is not enough to build up a character. Religious education is necessary because the study of high principles keeps us away from evil pursuits. Religion reveals to us the form of the Almighty. Says our religion that a man by virtue of his action can become even a god. When we can become gods even, by virtue of our action, why may we not become wise and active by means of our action like the Europeans ? Some say that religion begets quarrel. But I ask, 'Where is it written in religion to pick up quarrels ?' If there be any religion in the world which advocates toleration of other religious beliefs and instructs one to stick to one's own religion, it is the religion of the Hindus alone. Hinduism to the Hindus, Islamism to the Musalmans will be taught in these schools. And it will also be taught there to forgive and forget the differences of other religions."<sup>1</sup> Tilak also stressed the necessity of imparting industrial education. Political education should also be imparted in educational institutions because otherwise citizens do not get enlightenment about their rights and duties. Tilak declared that the load of the study of foreign language had to be lightened if the students were to assimilate the things that were taught to them and if they were not to become pseudo-educated dilettantes who had crammed a great amount of ill-digested information.

Tilak had begun his tour of Maharashtra in February 1908 with a view to collect five lakhs of rupees for the Samarthan Vidyalaya and he achieved a great amount of success in his enterprise. During 1907-1908 Tilak delivered several speeches on national education. On the 14th September, 1907 Sitaran

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<sup>1</sup> *Bal Gangadhar Tilak : His Writings and Speeches* (Madras, Ganesh & Co., 1918), pp. 84-85.

Keshav Damle delivered a speech in the Gaikwad Wada and Tilak presided over the meeting. He proposed that the books of Dadabhai and R. C. Dutt should be taught in the educational institutions of Maharashtra. On November 15, 1907 a "Swadeshi Sammelan" had been organized at Pandharpur under the presidentship of C. V. Vaidya where Tilak pleaded for the incorporation of industrial and agricultural training in the educational curriculum. Since the government was indifferent in this matter it was essential for the people to devote attention in this direction. In 1907 while going to attend the festival of Sri Chidambar Swami in Gurlhospur, Tilak stopped for a while in Belgaum and spoke on the theme of national education. On March 30, 1908 a function was arranged in the Sarvajanik Sabha to pay tributes to the memories of Vishnushastry Chiploonkar where Tilak said that it was essential to produce patriotic youngmen for the regeneration of the country. Thus we see that during 1907-1908 he preached the vitalizing of the educational programs by incorporating into it sentiments of strength, political rights, nationalist fervour and industrial training.<sup>1</sup> These ideas of Tilak have great significance even in independent India.

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<sup>1</sup> *Speeches of Lokamanya Tilak* (In Marathi, Poona, Kesari Maratha Trust, 1938), pp. 200-204, 212-14, 217-219.

## *John Dewey*

John Dewey (1859-1952) has been the most effective spokesman of modern American thought and civilization. He has tried to build pragmatic instrumentalism as a systematic body of thought and has classified its implications in epistemology, social and political philosophy, aesthetics and education. The pragmatism which had its sources in Peirce<sup>1</sup> and James (1842-1910)<sup>2</sup> attained its thorough maturity in Dewey. He is one of those significant figures whose ideas have influenced not only the thought of people but have also powerfully moulded practice. His philosophical notions have had wide educational bearings and it is no exaggeration to say that he is the most eminent philosopher of our time whose educational influence has been so vitally felt not only in the U.S.A. but also in other lands. He has critically reacted against some of the powerful philosophical and educational influences of his time and has also constructed a system of his own. His *Experience and Nature* (1925), *Art and Experience* (1933), and *Logic* (1939) embody his mature philosophical reflections. His Cifford Lectures embodied in *The Quest for Certainty* (1929) are an attempt to use the scientific method for the interpretation of philosophical problems. His most popular as well as systematic book in the field of education is *Democracy and Education* (1916). He has tried to build up the sociology of democratic liberalism in *The Public and its Problems*, *Individualism : Old and New*, and *Liberalism and Social Action*. The strength of Dewey lies in his immense grasp of the realities of life. He does not soar in the transcendental regions of the motionless spiritual

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<sup>1</sup> Charles S. Peirce (1839-1914), *Collected Papers of C. S. Peirce*. He was influenced by Kant, Darwin and the medieval realist Duns Scotus.

<sup>2</sup> W. James, *Talks to Teachers* (1899), *Principles of Psychology*, 2 Vols. (1890).

being but his both feet are firmly planted in the pressing situations of the day. In his early days he was influenced by Hegel's synthetic universalism but soon he made a transition to more realistic criteria. His thought is the product of a vigorous, agile and searching mind which refused to be satisfied with the traditional methods and formulas. The American quest for adventure, realism and democracy has attained intellectual consciousness in the writings of Dewey and if it is possible for a big powerful civilization to find its reflection in the writings of one philosopher, Dewey can very well claim to be the embodiment of the American *Volksgeist*. This aspect of Dewey has been expressed almost in superlative terms by Whitehead who rates Dewey's services to American civilization to be analogous to those of Bacon, Descartes, Locke and Comte to the modern world.<sup>1</sup>

### **i. Philosophical Foundations of Education**

Dewey does not conceive philosophy as concerned with problems of transcendental mysticism or dogmatic theology. It is a body of critical generalizations. It aims to systematize the abstractions and conclusions of the social and the natural sciences at a generalized level.<sup>2</sup> This philosophical systematization is not in the form of a mere addition and summation but is a consistent attempt to provide an integrated methodological formula to achieve a wholeness of outlook. He says : "When science denotes not simply a report of particular facts discovered about the world but a *general attitude* toward it—as distinct from special things to do—it merges into philosophy."<sup>3</sup> The problems arising in course of social conflicts and struggles provide vital issues for philosophical reflections. The range of philosophy is vast. "Lies, dreams, insanities, deceptions, myths, theories are all of them just the events they specifically are. Pragmatism is content to take its stand with science ; for science

<sup>1</sup> Whitehead's article, "John Dewey and his Influence" in *The Philosophy of John Dewey* (Tudor Publishing Co.), pp. 477-78.

<sup>2</sup> *Democracy and Education* p. 384. Here Dewey distinguishes between the *critical* and *interpreting* functions of philosophy.

<sup>3</sup> John Dewey, *Democracy and Education*, p. 379.

finds all such events to be subject-matter of description and inquiry—just like stars and fossils, mosquitos and malaria, circulation and vision. It also takes its stand with daily life, which finds that such things have to be reckoned with as they occur interwoven in the texture of events.<sup>21</sup> Philosophy is not to be interpreted in the sense of other-worldly speculations but is to provide general insights into the processes of dynamic adjustment with the environment wherein man finds himself placed. It (philosophy) is neither ethereal in its orientation, nor is it a body of contemplative reflections. It emerges in the process of intellectual consciousness of the experiences felt and undergone by man in his struggles with the situational matrix.

The world is a difficult and indeterminate place. It is only by the operations of knowing that a man obtains the tools and technics for adjusting himself to it. The world is constantly changing and moving. To be more correct, there is not one world as a substance but there are many worlds. There is no predetermining spiritual being presiding over the destiny of things harmonizing all beings and events in their journey to a final blissful *telos*. The basic matrix of philosophical problems and answers is human life in a world infected with uncertainty and constant predicament. Life in a difficult world is the source of philosophical problems. But life is action, movement and doing. Hence the objects of knowledge are the changing things of the world. There is no archetypal original world of heavenly essences. It is a moving perceptible world. Knowledge is concerned with the constant operations of man in this earthly world. Hence knowing is a form of doing and it does not exist apart from that which is known. Knowledge is a vital instrument in the process of adjustment with the world and it aims to make available the achieved results of experiences of one human being to others. The source of knowledge is subjective because it has its genesis in the experiences of particular human beings but its aim is to be an objective body of verified generalizations for the good of other human beings. In a democratic community it is necessary to have a medium for the communication of knowledge by

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<sup>21</sup> John Dewey, *Creative Intelligence*, p. 55.

which the experiences of individuals and groups can be placed at the disposal of the entire society.<sup>1</sup>

In the modern world the scientific methods are the best keys to knowledge because they save us from the uncertainties of a trial and error method. But although Dewey is a votary of science he does not favor that rationalism of the eighteenth century which claimed to base itself on science. This school of rationalism was too much obsessed by the grandeur of human reason and hence it tended to disregard the paramount influence of habits and emotions and impulses in social life. In its urgent wish to fashion things anew in the light of reason alone it took an irreverent, even hostile attitude towards the existing institutions and associations. Its concept of reason was mathematical, abstract and universal. Dewey, on the other hand, would not neglect the specific and the particular dimensions in knowledge. As a democrat he would place great value on the development of the reason of the multiple number of human beings.

There is no rigid separation between action and thinking. Action, so to say, finally results in knowledge. The problems of physical and social environment set moving the thinking process of the human mind. Thinking originates in action oriented to the realization of adjustment. For the solutions of the problems emerging in actual life-situations we take recourse to suggestions, inferences and suppositions. These are called hypotheses in technical language. These hypotheses are tested and verified in actual practice. If they are successful, they are considered valid, otherwise an alternative hypothesis is tried. This is the scientific procedure of obtaining knowledge. Sometimes Dewey makes distinction between thinking and knowledge. Knowledge, already attained and stabilized, controls thinking and makes it fruitful. It is possible that this knowledge may be concerned only with what has been attained and thus may become only retrospective. But in an ever-changing world, thinking is dominantly prospective.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> John Dewey, in *Democracy and Education*, pp. 395, 396, 399, 400, 401, discusses the epistemological foundations of a democratic society.

<sup>2</sup> John Dewey, *Democracy and Education*, pp. 176, 177-178.

Since active adjustment in an ever-moving world is absolutely essential, hence thinking is a pre-eminent requirement of the human species. The stress on activity is central in Dewey's thought. Hence ideas are regarded as anticipations of possible solutions of unadjusted areas in human life. Ideas may be defined as anticipations of some continuity or the connection of an activity and a consequence which has not as yet shown itself. They are not immutable universals but forecasts calculated to influence responses in a changing world. They are incentives to action and not the inhabitants of a super-terrestrial world of their own. There is no such phenomenon as the external imposition of transcendent truth.<sup>1</sup> The central fact is the realization of activity in accordance with the scheme of ideas or hypotheses.

Dewey is a naturalist. He does not accept any transcendent reality or any absolutist metaphysical system. Naturalism is the consequence of the acceptance of the scientific method. It pleads for the all-round applications of the method which has been so successful in the case of the natural sciences. He denies the reality of mystic institutions and supernormal modes of cognition and is firm in his adherence to the methods of scientific inquiry. Experimentalism is the key word in a scientific methodological procedure. "The heart of the experimental method is determination of the significance of observed things by means of deliberate institution of modes of interaction."<sup>2</sup> The logic of the experimental method stresses the employment of ideas and principles for dealing overtly and actively with facts if the latter are to be the necessary ingredients of a successfully adjusted world. It is essential that both facts and concepts should become elements in and instruments of intelligently controlled action.<sup>3</sup> Experimentalism is opposed to the recognition of a fixed system of immanent teleology or pre-established harmony. Hence in place of the idealist quest for eternally perfect changeless fixed principles it stresses provisional hypotheses and their testing and verification. Empirical

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<sup>1</sup> John Dewey, *The School and the Child*, p. 45.

<sup>2</sup> John Dewey, *Logic*, p. 511.

<sup>3</sup> John Dewey's article "Logic" in the *Encyclopaedia of Social Sciences*.

and practical verification is the essence of the scientific experimental method. It refuses to accept the rigid distinction between thought and action which has been so much emphasized in the idealistic systems of thought.

A necessary implication from experimental naturalism is the acceptance of the concept of evolution and continuity. Man is continuous with nature. This does not mean that man can be reduced to nature or can be explained in terms of naturalistic physics or mechanics. Certainly man today is at that stage of evolution when an immense range of transition has been made away from mere physico-chemical action and organization. The concept of continuity does not mean the neutralization of the aims, affections, aspirations and will of man. Basically and fundamentally man is, in terms of origin, continuous with nature and is not a special substance specially created by some divine being. Thus Dewey's naturalistic humanism is different both from gross reductive materialism and the concept of the special creation of man.

These basic concepts—experimental logic, scientific naturalism, ideas as anticipations, the stress on dynamic adjustment with the world—are greatly relevant for a discussion of the theories and nature of education. Dewey does recognize the "career of philosophy as matrix of educational theory and practice."<sup>1</sup> The Sophists were the great educators of ancient Greece and they wanted to train people for successful political careers. Plato's *Republic*, although it contains moral, metaphysical and eschatological discussions, has been regarded by Rousseau as the greatest book on education. Even in the eighteenth century the French disciples of Locke, like Helvetius, preached the omnipotence of education for social transformation. This followed from their empiricist metaphysics. Locke had conceived the mind to be a fit receptacle for receiving and containing external impressions and from this the implication was drawn of the perfect efficiency and potency of education. In the nineteenth century also educational implications were drawn from the dialectical metaphysics of Hegel and from the

<sup>1</sup> John Dewey's article "Philosophy" in the *Encyclopaedia of Social Sciences*.

Herbartian psychology of the soul. These examples illustrate the close connexion of philosophical and educational theory in the course of their advance. Education is the process of forming intellectual and emotional dispositions towards the physical and social environment and thus it may be regarded as the laboratory in which philosophical concepts and ideas are tested and become concrete. If philosophy is not to degenerate into empty conceptualism and sentimental effusions it must influence social conduct and practice by utilizing the energies of human beings. Education thus offers an area from which the human side of philosophy can be studied. Hence it may even be said that philosophy is the general theory of education.

## 2. Nature and Theory of Education

Etymologically, education signifies a process of leading or bringing up.<sup>1</sup> It thereby implies the ways and technics of cultivating and fostering social activity. The ineluctable, mysterious and inevitable phenomena of the birth and death of the constituent members of a society make it essential that the immature children be trained in imbibing the ethics, symbols, patterns of behaviour and modes of conduct prevailing in the social structure. A community sustains itself through social self-renewal. Education is this process of social self-renewal. It has the same significance in the life of the community which nutrition and reproduction have in the life of a physiological organism. A community subsists through the multiple inter-dependence of intelligent human beings and education is that process of social communication which fosters cooperative action. It modifies the disposition of both the parties who partake in it. Through social communication human beings are enabled to receive those accumulated technics and symbols which make possible the perpetuation of society. In the animal world the young ones begin to move, soon after their birth. But in the human kingdom there is a prolonged period of infancy and this necessitates continued protection of the offspring by the older members. Furthermore, the growth of the complexities of civilization make the processes of learning the

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<sup>1</sup> John Dewey, *Democracy and Education*, p. 12.

technics and symbols of social living still more difficult and arduous and this increases the necessity of education. The history of man is a vast record of the transformations which human efforts have brought about on the face of earth. Man has been engaged throughout the ages in turning an alien natural environment into a meaningful cultural environment. Education is the process which facilitates the incorporation of meanings into social action. Things and objects gain meaning by being used in conjoint action and shared experience. Language is the most important symbolical device to facilitate the process of social communication and the perpetuation of meaningful insights and experiences obtained in the process of social action. The cumulative experiences and the total ethos of the community constitute the bases of social structure and these are conveyed to the succeeding generations through transmission. Education is this potent process of transmission.

Education is vital for the perpetuation of social existence. The very process of living together leads to the education of the young. It extends the range and depth of experience, it fosters and quickens imagination and strengthens the foundations of character by stressing the importance of loyalty and responsibility. Education, thus, is not merely a vital means and necessity of life but in a fundamental sense all genuine living is educative. It adds to the character of life and supplements the crudities of nature by cultural refinements and the transmission of social inheritance. It, thus, enhances the qualitative richness of existence by providing opportunities and stimuli to the young for quickened and enlivening experiences. Life cannot be considered as the mere arithmetical summation of uncoordinated moments of experience and by education an artistic integration and enrichment is provided to it. It thus becomes a ceaseless process of quest after perfection. This process of growth is not the realization of eternal beatitude or an immutable bliss but it means the ever-fresh conscious moulding of the factors and events of nature into opportunities for the adequate selection of stimuli so that the meaning and development of life might be encouraged. Development thus is the key concept both in life and education. Life has its essence in growth and expansion of energies. Education is the process of

this extension of the powers of man in processes of action. Thus it can be said that life itself has a vitally educative character. There is no point in time in a man's life when it can be said that his education has ended. Genuine life and education are synonymous terms.

Training is important in education. It has great significance in the modern scientific and industrial civilization. Vocational training is very essential today. But although in the context of the complexities of modern civilization vocational training is important, still it has reference only to overt behavior while education has to do also with the formulation of intellectual and emotional disposition.

Environment is a significant category in any scheme of educational discussion. It means those conditions which are specifically relevant to the occupation and characteristic activities of men. There is a dynamic connection between the environment and the activities of men. The former is not only the theatre for the performance of external activities but it enters into the formation of the mental beliefs and aspirations of man. It arouses and strengthens certain impulses while it neutralizes certain others which are not fitted to the specific performance of the necessary social activities. The language, manners, morals and powers of aesthetic appreciation of human beings are eloquent testimonies to the influence of the environment upon them. This makes it essential that the teacher should be concerned with the shaping of the actual experiences of pupils through stimuli selected from the environment. It is imperative that a selection should be made of the environment which conduces to the generation of worthwhile experiences. The surroundings that lead to growth should be encouraged while the alien influences have to be eliminated. The control of the environment is specially important for education because we never educate directly but by means of the environment. Hence instead of depending on any chance environment it is essential deliberately to design the environment.

The educator has not only to control the environment but he has also to see that only those attitudes and habitual tendencies are fostered in the student population which are essential for growth. All -counteracting tendencies have to be

rigidly excluded. But this will involve that the teacher must make an attempt to understand sympathetically the individuals.

In the earlier stages of civilization the job of the teacher was simple. But with the growth of social complexity the importance of the school as a social organ and community is growing. It is no longer possible today to be content only with the informal imbibing of the social *mores* and traditions by the younger sections of the population. It is also essential to impart deliberate formal education. In this process the school has to play an important role.<sup>1</sup> Its deliberately designed and simplified atmosphere enables the pupils to learn the elements of social living in a comparatively easier manner than would be the case in the enormously complex environment of the modern industrial world. It being an intentionally and formally created social organ can eliminate all impure and undesirable elements and influence which might hinder the proper growth of children. Education is growth and development and the pure atmosphere of the school is of immense significance for the proper development of character. The school is a place of congregation of pupils belonging to diverse political, social and religious background and this kind of educational confraternity supplements the influences which can be obtained at the home. Thus it makes possible the escape from the limitations of the group wherein one is born. Hence the diverse background but homogeneous atmosphere of the school becomes a counterpoise to the self-glorifying tendencies of the several groups. It is, thus, a very important element in social growth, coordination and direction because it stands "midway between the extreme simplifications of the laboratory and the confused complexities of ordinary life."<sup>2</sup>

The pre-eminent role of the school as a vital agent of life and its continued growth is now being recognized on a greater scale.<sup>3</sup> The interest in pre-school education, parental education and nursery schools is one sign. There is also a tendency

<sup>1</sup> John Dewey, *Democracy and Education*, pp. 23-25.

<sup>2</sup> John Dewey, *Educational Essays*, p. 158.

<sup>3</sup> *Intelligence in the Modern World, John Dewey's Philosophy*, p. 607. (Henceforward this book will be indicated by the short title, *Intelligence*.)

to recognize the impact of social hygiene and mental education on the schools and, above all, there is the persistent desire to interpret the school not as an isolated cloistered centre of academic training but as an important ingredient in social life and collective existence.

Education has to guide and direct the young in the pursuit of desirable shared experiences. It should aim not at authoritarian dictation from the Olympian heights of wisdom but should gradually guide the energies of the young towards the realization of adequate fulfilment of personality. The pupils can be properly guided only when appropriate stimuli are provided for the employment of their impulses in social activities and conjoint cooperative experiences. Through identity of interest and understanding in the common desire to realize specific social aims by means of concrete activities it is possible to obtain healthy direction of the life-process.

Education, in the process of properly directing the energies and activities of the young, leads to the essential growth not only of the individual members but also of the social structure because the latter is not a separate reality by itself but is only the accentuated social and communal aspect of the individual members in their associated living. Growth has to be stressed because the alternative is decay, stagnation and slow degeneration of the social collectivity itself. There is no transcendental and external goal of growth. Like a pragmatist and a sociological realist, Dewey thinks that it (growth) has to be determined with reference to the criterion whether it creates conditions for further growth or whether it impedes growths into novel channels. Hence the only aim of education is ever-continued growth. Life is growing and education is the process of this ever-increasing growth.

Dewey is a protagonist of the conception of education as growth and direction. This is only a corollary from the central significance of life in his philosophy. He is an enemy of all schools of transcendentalism, external teleology and mystic absorption. Hence he also criticizes the conception of education as a *preparation* for the realization of some remote future goal. What is of enormous significance is the present life and its possibilities. The maximum utilization has to be effected of

this life and its present opportunities. A dominating obsession with some far-off goal only serves to weaken the impetus to action because the opportunities of the present are not properly utilized. Pupils may like to indulge in fancies and day dreams and to delay the execution of the present work. It is essential that the immediate situation should be interpreted in such a meaningful way that it may provide the maximum stimulus for the responsive cooperation of pupils and the utilization of their energies. If the latter can be made to work only by lures of rewards or threats of penalties it means that something is wrong with the work at hand. The present work and its ramifications and inter-connections should provide the maximum attraction for pupils and it is not a healthy practice to make them tolerate the rigors of the present by singing the glories of a remote, perhaps unrealizable, Utopia.

Since education is the process of the proper direction and growth of the energies of pupils, it stresses a thorough development brought about by engaging in social activities. But this development, according to Dewey, is not the contemplation of some mystic whole as visualized in Froebel's thought.<sup>1</sup> Froebel (1782-1852) held that "the actuating force is the presentation of symbols, largely mathematical, corresponding to the essential trains of the absolute" but in this process of emphasizing the latent capacities of the pupils, there is the great danger of ignoring the interaction of present organic tendencies with the immediate environment.<sup>2</sup> Hegel inculcated the dialectical metaphysics of absolute idea. He stressed the enormous significance of the family, the civil society of economic corporations and the state as the concrete actuality of rationality, ethical substance and objective freedom. As against the empty moralizings of the Kantian formal pure will, Dewey is candid enough to acknowledge the social significance of Hegel's political philosophy but

<sup>1</sup> *Democracy and Education*, pp. 79-80.

<sup>2</sup> There are some common points in Dewey and Froebel :

- (a) Both stress child activity.
- (b) Both regard learning to be part and parcel of the process of living.
- (c) Both subordinate books to life.

(John Dewey, L. L. P. edition, p. 453)

he does not relish the educational implications of Hegelianism. He advocated vehemently the cult of conformity. Hegelian ethics was based upon the subordination of the individual to the compulsive obligations and demands of the established social and political institutions which, in turn, were regarded as the manifestations of the world-spirit. Dewey is a naturalist and an individualist and hence is opposed to the conception of education as *development* as formulated by Froebel and Hegel.

Nor is education to be conceived as the retrospective process of contemplating the past records and experiences of the human race. There may be some truth in the statement that the human infant from the embryo to its birth traverses in a summarized form the stages of the biological progression of human evolution. But this possible biological half-truth does not carry the educational implication that education should be similarly regarded as the reflection upon what has happened. The imperious demands of the present difficulties and adjustments are vital and hence education can never confine itself only to the study of the past. It has to look to the present and the future. We have to emancipate ourselves from some of the deadening influences of the past. Heredity does not have to be regarded as a predetermining factor so far as human evolution and development are concerned but stress has to be put on a suitable adjustment with the present situation.

Dewey is a firm believer in the universal application of the experimental method developed by modern science. It is true that the humanistic branches of study are not amenable to the rigid application of the scientific methods in all their rigor. Attempts, nevertheless, have to be made to apply them to the maximum possible extent. Furthermore, the scientific spirit of detachment, impartiality and objectivity are to be cultivated. The wide application of the experimental methods is antithetical to the acceptance of external aims in education. If remote and external aims are laid down they become fixed and rigid and are not integrally connected with the present and its activities. They also amount to external impositions on the student population. An abstract conception like education cannot have an inherent aim of its own. Aims can be cherished only by concrete human persons and they gain meaning if they are

directly connected with the specific activities of the present. Such immediate aims gain vitality from specific conjoint activities while the latter receive meaning from them. But the remoteness of external and transcendent aims, in case they are cherished, will be a great hindrance. Hence instead of a few external and transcendent aims, experimental logic will demand a plurality of immediate, specific and diversified aims relevant to present activities. An aim should guide the observation of materials, the choice of data and the conducting of activities. Only specific aims are vitally and integrally connected with the activities and can be tested, amended and modified in course of action.

Rousseau (1712-1778) was an outspoken critic of the sophistication of a perverted bourgeois civilization and he prescribed a return to simplicity. In his *Emile* (1762) he preached the cult of nature which was to provide the aims and criteria for education. Nature has certainly some important lessons to teach. In this gospel of a return to nature there was an emphasis on the development of bodily powers and physical mobility. Rousseau was right in recognizing the existence of differences among individuals as against any view of rational uniformity of natural gifts and endowments. But he over-emphasized his cult of nature<sup>1</sup> and in this shape it became tantamount to the enshrinement of primitivism. Hence sociability and the efficacy of training were suspected. In his zeal for nature, he went to the extent of regarding reason as a factor for depravement. Thus he indirectly condemned the notion of intelligent action in human civilization. Furthermore, he was also wrong in holding that the structures and activities of organs furnish not only "the conditions of all teaching of the use of organs" but also the ends of their development.<sup>2</sup>

But if the Rousseauic gospel of nature is inadequate as an educational maxim in modern civilization, the concept of social and industrial efficiency is also one-sided. It is true that in the modern competitive world, there is no hope and help away from the development of socially relevant and useful skills and knowledge. It is also essential to correlate the development of

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<sup>1</sup> *Democracy and Education*, pp. 130-38.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 133.

mental powers and social action. But in the craze for competitive efficiency and industrial rationalization the individuals should not be treated as mere agents to be fitted into a pre-existent social order. Hence it is essential to harmonize social and technical efficiency with the simultaneous recognition of individual diversities of tastes.

Education, as a science, is of modern growth, although there have been great philosophers who offered educational suggestions and plans of action. For its proper scientific growth it is essential to correlate the advance of educational theory with the developments in physiology, psychology and the natural sciences. The aim of education is informed and intelligent action.<sup>1</sup> Such action is a necessity of life and civilization, it is a vital social function, it leads to the cumulative growth of human creative powers and it alone can direct the energies of human beings into channels of fruitful growth. The proper perspective of socially relevant intelligent action is provided in the atmosphere of reason and science. The continuance of tradition, social conservatism and inertia is a bar to intelligent action. The grip of tradition at times becomes a fatal obstruction to growth. Hence it is essential to cultivate the native and acquired gifts of both teachers and pupils for meeting intelligently the challenges of the various pressures of modern civilization.

### **3. Experience and Education**

Experience is the central concept in Dewey's philosophy of education. Taking a synoptic view of education, he defines the essence of education to be the transformation of experience. The word experience is of long standing in philosophy. The Greek thinkers attempted to pattern philosophy on the model of mathematical sciences and Plato distinguished between the opinion (*doxa*) of the multiple objects and phenomena of the world based on practical and physical experience. This distinction was expressed in two Greek words—*techne* (knowledge) and *empiria* (experience). The Greek philosophers made a contrast

<sup>1</sup> John Dewey, *Philosophy and Civilization*, p. 316.

between knowledge and experience and this led to a depreciation of the latter. In the seventeenth century there was a great development of empirical philosophy specially in England. Locke, Berkeley and Hume were the protagonists of a philosophy of empiricism. Experience came to be regarded as a mode of knowing by means of sensations. Thus, while, according to the Greeks, knowledge and experience were antithetical concepts, according to modern empiricism, experience was regarded as a means of knowledge. Dewey, certainly, is aware of some of the principal shortcomings of modern empiricism. In the name of experience it tended to magnify mere physical excitations and this meant a neglect of the deep-seated active and motor factors of experience. An undue preoccupation with the physical objects of sense hampers the development of conceptual argumentation because there is a minimization of the role of reason in the genesis of knowledge. In the philosophies of Kant and Hegel attempts were made to supplement the inadequacies of immediate experience with the conceptual creative powers of reason. The neglect of the creative powers of reason was one main defect of the seventeenth century empiricism. Perhaps another defect was that the intrinsic active and emotional phases were left out of consideration and thus experience was identified with a passive reception of isolated sensations.

Experience has an active and a passive side. Every genuine experience does effect some change in the structure of the objective conditions which provide the situational matrix for it. The active side of experience tends to bring about some change in the arrangement of the existing conditions. There is also a passive phase of experience in which we undergo the consequences of acting. Mere activity is not experience.<sup>1</sup> In order that experiences may be genuine it is essential to perceive the connexion between something tried and something undergone.<sup>2</sup> It is essential to transform mere activity by infusing into it the concept of reason and if this transformation has been made with the help of the scientific methods then experience ceases to be merely empirical and becomes experimental.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Democracy and Education*, pp. 162-69.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 795.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 323.

In order to frame a theory of experience for education it is essential to modify the objective set up of the situation wherein educational activity is carried on. It is urgent to introduce the principle of selectivity in experiences. Only those experiences may be allowed to occur which are most conducive to the development of children. For its full success, it will mean not only the selection of the proper stimuli in the school but also the arrangement of the conditions at home in which an infant's experience of food and sleep occur. It is important to see that the problems which the pupils have to solve grow out of the context of present experiences. These problems should be within the capacity for solution of the students. The latter have to be encouraged to seek more information in order to satisfy the natural curiosity of the mind. This necessitates that the curiosity of the boys is not stifled. Each and every present experience is important and attention is to be devoted to bring out its maximum meaning. Only in this way can the pupils be trained to face the hazards of the future. The starting-point of instruction is the amount of experience the pupils already have and attempts are to be made to arrange the subject-matter in such way that orderly development of experience can be attained. This requires the use of experimental methods. Only the utilization of modern scientific methods can provide the technics for the maximum utilization of the significance of the meaning of present experiences.<sup>1</sup> Hence Dewey advocates the "intelligently directed development of the possibilities inherent in ordinary experience."<sup>2</sup>

There are two significant principles for the interpretation of experience and the revelation of its educational function and importance.<sup>3</sup> The first principle of continuity of experience means that that kind of present experience should be selected and emphasized which lives fruitfully and creatively in the course of future experiences. It is essential to judge the quality of experience because mere continuity may become utterly mechanical. Education is a continued growth through experiences and the gradual revelation of the expanding world of

<sup>1</sup> *Experience and Education*, p. 108.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 113-14.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 17, 38, 53-54.

objects is essential. This means a continual reorganization and reconstruction of experience. The concept of continuity emphasizes the richness of the process of experiencing because the teacher has to be careful in the selection of those objective conditions which will generate meaningful experiences. Thus can a stream of meaningful experience be provided. A second criterion for the interpretation of experience is interaction. There are two factors in experience—the objective matrix of conditions and the internal mental process of perceiving the relations of consequences. Any moral experience is an interplay of these two sets of conditions. It is essential to emphasize the interaction between the objective structure of the environment and the internal organism of human beings because a neglect of the concept of interaction may jeopardize the ever-growing adjustment of the two and we may be tempted to worship the fixed and the rigid *status quo*. Hence Dewey defines education as the continuous reconstruction of experience.<sup>1</sup> This notion of education stresses the enhancement of the capacity for seeing meanings and interactions. It differentiates creative social activity in pursuit of educational experience from the mechanism of routine and also from the arbitrariness of caprice and immediate uncoordinated fancy.

The emphasis on the notion of experience has made Dewey opposed to the traditional methods of teaching. In the older educational system primacy was put upon the inculcation and transmission of external information without taking into consideration the receptive capacity of students. Thus there was a neglect of the principle of interaction between the objective transmission of information and the receptive organism of the student population. Another defect of the older schools was their formal conception of discipline. Discipline was regarded as a matter of external imposition and dictation by the superior authority of the teacher. The theory of the reconstruction of experiences, on the other hand, stresses the carrying on of

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<sup>1</sup> According to Dewey, the theory of education as continuous reconstruction of experience synthesizes four views of education : (a) as a necessity of life, (b) as a social function, (c) as direction, and (d) as growth.  
—*Democracy and Education*, p. 89.

such conjoint activities in which order and discipline flow from the purposive adaptation of the means and actions for the realization of the specific tasks and duties. Everybody is to be engaged in faithfully performing his part of the work and the organic relevance of the function and the temperament of pupils have to be organized in such a fashion that absorption in the performance of duties provides order and discipline. Thus it is essential to regard the school as a community of common ends concretely expressed in performance of conjoint activities. This implies the solicitation of the active cooperation of the pupils in the work of the school in terms of the participation of the learners in educational activities which are pregnant with relevant aims capable of immediate realization and full of deep significance. The stress on learning through experiences gained in free activities in the pursuit of attempts at the maximum possible exploitation of present opportunities would result in the acquisition of skills, technics, insights and values which are of enormous significance for the expansion and manifestation of individuality. This theory of education as a thorough reconstruction of experience is meant as a superior alternative to the old-fashioned notions of education as imposition of learning from above or as mastery of texts or as preparation for a remote future.<sup>1</sup> The emphasis on the reconstruction of experiences through continuity and interaction is also in consonance with the idealism of democracy which preaches the substitution of compulsion by more human methods and which would encourage trial and error by the students in place of the imposition of a neatly perfect system from above. According to the logic of experimental naturalism experience provides the ultimate criterion of both truth and value and it is essential to utilize its implications in an educational context.<sup>2</sup>

#### **4. Psychological Foundations of Education**

Although not a professional psychologist Dewey has been keenly interested in the implications of modern psychological

<sup>1</sup> *Experience and Education*, p. 5.

<sup>2</sup> *The Philosophy of John Dewey* (L.L.P. Series, ed. by Schilpp), p. 434.

developments for the purpose of educational theories. His book *Human Nature and Conduct* has long been regarded as significant for the rejection of the concept of fixed instincts and for its advocacy of the malleability and plasticity of human nature. In one sense, psychology if properly pursued, becomes a theory of education<sup>1</sup> in so far as it stresses the role of action and participation for the purposes of inter-subjective communication. Such a psychological process is an aid to mental training.

For some time in the past the faculty psychology associated with Locke held the field. Memory, reasoning, accuracy, discrimination and imagination were regarded as men's faculties which required a formal training and exercise for their development.<sup>2</sup> The stress was on formal and not on content discipline. Each faculty was considered substantive entity and was thought to have an existence of its own. But mental faculties are not powers in themselves but they are so only in reference to the functions they have to perform. What were called faculties are only coordinations of particular impulses and habits for the purpose of accomplishing some work.<sup>3</sup> Another school of thought which had great prestige attached to it because of its association with the name of Kant was the dualistic psychology accepting the separation of sense and reason. The entire Kantian ethics is based on this separation. Dewey challenged the dualistic assumption. He denied that impulses and appetites or the senses are directed by the motive of obtaining pleasure. The maintenance of the life-process and the putting forth of activity is the central biological and psychological urge and the emphasis on socially-oriented intelligent action (involving the use both of senses and reason) would provide a neutralization of the Kantian dualism.<sup>4</sup> Dewey has also been critical of the French socio-psychological school of imitation sponsored by Gabriel Tarde (1843-1904)<sup>5</sup> and followed by Gustave Le Bon (1841-1931). According to Dewey there is

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<sup>1</sup> Allport's article in *The Philosophy of John Dewey*, p. 281.

<sup>2</sup> *The Philosophy of John Dewey*, pp. 459-50.

<sup>3</sup> *Educational Essays*, pp. 32-33.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 118.

<sup>5</sup> G. Tarde, *Laws of Imitation* (New York, 1903).

no instinct of imitation. The results supposed to follow from mechanical imitation really proceed from "partaking with others in a use of things."<sup>1</sup> If by mechanical imposition imitativeness is furthered then it becomes a deterrent to the power of remaking old habits. In this changing world the environment is constantly undergoing dynamic shifts and a mechanical drilled imitativeness cannot enkindle the power of wide perception of meanings and inter-connections.

The older schools of psychology had some undesirable influences on educational practice. There was a neglect of the social content in education.<sup>2</sup> The materials of instruction were presented in an external and mechanical manner and no attempt was made to organically connect the materials which already formed the content of the child's experiences with the new stuff presented at school. Hence knowledge was conceived as isolated and not a consequence of genuine perception of inter-connections motivated by the quest of assimilating the new with the old materials. Hence the element of thought-provokingness was obscured and ignored and a gap was supposed to exist between the receiving mental organism and the structure of the situation. Thus there was the absence of a sense of progressive development in the curriculum. There was the lack of psychological harmony between the subject-matter and the mental growth of the child.<sup>3</sup> One pertinent example of this separation was seen in the controversy between the interest school and the will school in pedagogics.

The Herbartian school is regarded as the champion of the theory of interest in education. J. F. Herbart (1776-1841) vehemently criticized the theory of faculties and stressed the formation of mind by advocating the theory of presentations.<sup>4</sup> According to him sensations are realizations of tension in the mind, while desire or will is an inhibited idea. He outlined

<sup>1</sup> *Democracy and Education*, p. 44.

<sup>2</sup> *The School and the Child*, pp. 110-13.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>4</sup> There are three means of education according to Herbart :  
 (i) Government—it produces an external order.  
 (ii) Discipline —it leads to virtue.  
 (iii) Instruction —it leads to a systematic cultivation of ideas.

four steps of instruction as means to education—clearness, association, system and method.<sup>1</sup> Interest is considered a psychical activity and the realization of this activity leads to the feeling of pleasure.<sup>2</sup> It inheres in the object for its own sake. Genuine interest is always immediate and involuntary. It is considered the means of establishing certain ideas and certain connections between ideas so that they become influential in engaging the attention of the child and in influencing his conduct. As opposed to the school which stressed interest or pleasure there was the school which emphasized the serious cultivation of efforts and will. It was apprehensive that the stress on pleasure would jeopardize the seriousness of the pedagogical art. But both these schools are extreme in their standpoints. It is essential that the subject-matter studied should have immediate power of appeal in view of its social relevance and effectiveness. But any attempt to make it interesting by external means or inducement betokens a lack of intrinsic end. There is the danger that the extreme concern for making things deliberately interesting may result in the alternation of excited over-stimulation and dull apathy on the student population. On the other hand, while an extreme emphasis on the seriousness of will and efforts results in the maintenance of the external framework of discipline, in the absence of effective appeal of the subject-matter the students tend to revel in a subterranean fanciful world of imageries and thus the net result is divided attention. The common defect of both the interest and will schools is that they regard the self as a fixed agent which has to be impelled from the outside either by the deliberate incorporation of a pleasure element in the subject-matter or by imposing discipline and demanding efforts. A more correct approach, however, is to interpret the entire pedagogical process in terms of a dynamic interaction between the environment and the child.<sup>3</sup>

There is no serious conflict between interest and discipline.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Herbart, *Encyclopaedia of the Social Sciences*.

<sup>2</sup> *Educational Essays*, pp. 119-20.

<sup>3</sup> John Dewey, *Interest and Effort in Education* (Boston, Houghton Mifflin, 1913).

<sup>4</sup> *Educational Essays*, pp. 128-30.

Interest grows and expands in the process of the realization of intelligent activity. Discipline is the capacity to handle the environment in an orderly and systematic way. Hence there can be no conflict between the two. Discipline is an inherent characteristic of the trained mind. There are three phases of interest.<sup>1</sup> In the first or active and propulsive phase, there is action when the human being is set on doing something urgent. Impulse and self are not two different entities but the former is "simply the impetus or outgoing of the self in one direction or another."<sup>2</sup> In the second or objective phase (of interest), every interest attaches itself to an object. The third phase of interest is emotional.<sup>3</sup> Value is not only something objective but subjective and in every phase of realization of interest we have an internal realization of value. The student population can feel genuine interest in education when "it is the accompaniment of the identification, through action of the self with some object or idea for the maintenance of self-expression."<sup>4</sup> Interest and discipline are correlative. Interest is impulsive functioning with reference to an idea of self-expression. It indicates the functioning and operative action of emotional force and thus it has relevance to activity having a purpose. Hence instead of arguing in terms of the dualism of interest and will it is essential to train the mind by providing an environment which encourages intelligent action and purposive engagements. Both desire and effort are correlatives and phases of mediated interest. Desire is only one special phase of emotion. It arouses energy and stimulates the means for the actualization of theoretic or aesthetic ends. Hence instead of engaging in the divergent advocacy of either interest (or pleasure) and will (or desire) as was witnessed in America in the controversy of the Herbartians<sup>5</sup> and Harris,<sup>6</sup> Dewey advocates the intelligent

<sup>1</sup> *Educational Essays*, pp. 92-98.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 89.

<sup>5</sup> Some of the American Herbartians were Charles de Garmo, Francis W. Parker (1837-1902) and Frank McMurray. In 1895 a Herbartian Society was established.

<sup>6</sup> William T. Harris (1835-1918), *Psychologic Foundation of Education* (New York, Appleton, 1908).

training of will. Will refers to the power of initiative and it emphasizes the constant adjustment of relevant means to end. A genuine training of will implies the use of those means and technics which tend to "growth in independence and firmness of action conjoined with sincere deliberation and reasoned insight." This attempt to interpret interest and effort as correlates and not contradictions shows that Dewey upholds the conception of an organismic psychology in places of isolating mental functions and treating them as entities. Psychology as a social science has to provide help in progressive mental adaptation.

The older psychological schools conceived mind as a substantial entity in juxtaposition to the external world.<sup>1</sup> But mind, to Dewey, is not a fixed substance or an element or the private property of an individual. It is a function of social life. The biological concept of heredity strengthens this notion because it regards the mental and physical equipment of the individual as an inheritance from the history of the race. The theory of evolution further reinforces it by accepting the development of the individual mind through the process of dynamic interaction and adjustment to the environment. Mind is a growing process and it presents distinct phases of capacity and interest in terms of interaction with a distinct set of stimuli.<sup>2</sup> Mind is thus intentional, purposeful activity. It is the power to understand things. It is thus equivalent to the acquisition of rationality for controlling the forces of the environment and grasping their meaning. It implies learning by participation in social activities. Mind appears in the individual when he can anticipate the consequences of his action and can thus establish a causal nexus between the courses of action and the probable concatenation of consequences. It is not a property acquired at birth. There is a gradual growth of the mind. In processes of social adjustments the human being acquires mind. Dewey goes to the length of interpreting mind in terms of radical dynamic functionalism to such an extent that he regards mind, individual method and originality as even convertible terms.<sup>3</sup> There is a

<sup>1</sup> *The School and the Child*, pp. 108-10.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 112-13.

<sup>3</sup> *Democracy and Education*, pp. 39-40, 120, 203, 344, 368.

certain psychological fund with which a child is born and mind is an organization of original capacities into activities having significance. For quite long the separation of body and mind has been recognized in psychology and this dualism had its analogous developments in the recognition of the separation of thought and action and theory and practice. The experimental naturalism of Dewey is opposed to such dualisms and separations. The separation of body and mind, on the one side, results in the formulation of a mere academic and pedantic conception of theoretical learning, and on the other hand, leads to the cultivation of an attitude of disgust for manual labor and bodily activities. But the instrumentalistic theory of the mind as an intelligent process of functional adjustment interprets education in terms of enlightened action as the end of intellectual advancement.

The dynamic conception of the mind as the intelligent purposive handling of the situation repudiates the conception of thinking as a separate mental process. Thinking is "an affair of the way of employing objects observed and suggested—the way they run and are made to run together."<sup>1</sup> Reflection thus is an intelligent purposive response to the needs and demands of the situation. Hence it is imperative that the situational context of thought is kept in view and the environmental conditions are such as evoke and guide curiosity. The things that one experiences should be made to offer helpful and fruitful suggestions. The consecutiveness of the experiences is maintained by concrete action in pursuit of the hypothesis and tentative ideas suggested and elicited by the environmental matrix. In short, the process of reflection means the systematic use of the scientific experimental methods. The orientation of the seventeenth century scientific procedures and formulas was deductive while the modern trend is more empirical and inductive. The basic educational implication from this empiricist trend is that there should be no external imposition of thought but such stimuli should be arranged as will lead to a dynamic interaction between the environment and the organism. This implies the study of the conditions that accelerate or retard the expression of individual

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<sup>1</sup> *Intelligence*, p. 613.

traits and mental operations. The atmosphere of the school should be so designed as to evoke endless suggestiveness and thus set the reflective process to operate in significant direction. It is clear thus that thinking is not an inward process of meditation and contemplation but is the organizing of insight obtained in the experiencing process generated by the interaction of the environment and the organism.

The older psychology stressed the cognitive side of man. Hence it relegated emotions and endeavours to a subordinate place. The instrumentalistic psychology discusses the origin of ideas in the context of action and it emphasizes the function of emotion in experiences. The function of emotion is to canalize sufficient amount of energy in periods of tension that at times characterize the life of the human being.<sup>1</sup> Emotion thereby reinvigorates the actor for facing the novel elements in the concrete situations. Thus it can be regarded as a necessary psychological tonic.

It is also essential to recognize attention as a psychological entity in the educational process and deal effectively with it. The recognition of the inter-play of sensations, images and motor impulses is imperative in any educational scheme. The same holds true of memory, observation and judgment. The traditional systems of education neglected the role of reflective attention, which depends upon interest in an intelligently conceived problem. The child should accept a problem as his own and he has to be encouraged to find out the answers. In such a process, instead of paying mechanical attention to books and the teachers, spontaneous or non-voluntary attention is generated in course of attending to the work at hand.<sup>2</sup> In this way the ideal does not remain an external end of action but is transformed into a motive. Motive is a power inducing to activity. If this process of generating and activizing attention by stressing the motive for socially fruitful activities is continued for some time then it results in the formation of habits. The characteristic of habit is that every experience undergone, leads to a modification of the disposition of the actor.<sup>3</sup> This modification

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<sup>1</sup> *Educational Essays*, pp. 105-6.

<sup>2</sup> *The School and the Child*, p. 89.

<sup>3</sup> *Experience and Education*, pp. 26-27.

affects subsequent experiences. It is true that impulse is the starting-point of any action but it is essential to have a foresight of the consequences of the action too. Thus acting for the realization of a purpose would involve the operation of observation, information and judgment and thus it would lead to the use of reflection. The observation of the environmental scene and context and judgment about the probable chain of consequences can alone provide the emotional support which can be the motive for a socially-oriented scheme of intelligent action which is the essence of the educational process.

The child is a plastic organism. His immaturity is in one sense his weakness but in another sense it is his strength because it indicates the vital capacity for being influenced by pedagogical processes and stimuli. The child should be treated as specially meant for growth. Growth is the essence of genuine experience and it constitutes the worth of life. Hence the aim should be to stress growth and full growth for its own sake. The essential thing is to arrange for a suitable and continuous interaction between the environment and the organism and only this practice can ensure the full and free mental activity of the child. This is a more helpful psychological device for education than the premature attempt to bring into play the logical and analytical powers.

### **5. The Curriculum**

The correlation of the psychological structure of the child and the devising of a relevant curriculum in the school has been one of the formidable problems of pedagogy.<sup>1</sup> The child lives in the narrow world of the home, the neighbourhood and the school premises. The curriculum refers to an impersonal world vastly extended in spatio-temporal dimension. The child is governed by practical and emotional attachments while the curriculum reveals the logical methods of analysis, argumentation and systematic presentation. The life of the child is an organic unity while the curriculum consists of different subject-matters having specialized areas as their field of enquiry. Due to this disparateness, the most important problem before the educator is to synthesize the freedom and spontaneous initiative

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<sup>1</sup> *The School and the Child*, pp. 21-24.

of the child with the necessity of guidance and control on the part of the teacher. The schools which emphasized curriculum stand for guidance, control; law and conservation of the old. Those schools which emphasized the child, enshrine freedom, interest and the quest for the new. But this is an artificial separation. Dewey says : "Abandon the notion of subject matter as something fixed and ready-made in itself, outside the child's experience; cease thinking of the child's experience as also something hard and fast; see it as something fluent, embryonic, vital; and we realize that the child and the curriculum are simply two limits which define a single process...The studies .....represent the possibilities of development inherent in the child's immediate crude experience."<sup>1</sup> Hence the task is to arrange the subject matter in such a way as will be relevant to the progressive reconstruction of the experience of the pupils. It is a mistake to belittle the present experiences of the pupils on the ground of their remoteness from adult experiences. No less is it a mistake to sing empty sentimental idealizations of the child's capacities and fancies. The real problem is to effect a balance between leaving the child completely free and subjecting him to rigorous dependence.

The growth of children in the process of learning is gradual and so the introduction of subject matter and skills should come in connection with ends which arise in their experience and thus become motives to effort. The children should be engaged in direct, expressive and constructive activities which lead to the emergence of problems and to their eventual solution. The materials of study must be relevant to the immediate background and surroundings and should be chosen in such a fashion as "to be taken up into the child's own experience." It is imperative to adapt the course of studies to the requirements of the community life. Not only the perpetuation of the existing social standards of action and satisfaction but a progressive improvement of the communal life is the desired objective and hence the subject matter has to be oriented to the community's needs.

It is also a mistake to separate subject matter from method.

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<sup>1</sup> *The School and the Child*, p. 25.

A method is not an *a priori* imposition but the most efficient and easy arrangement and handling of the subject matter. A mechanical prescription of method leads to the neglect of the concrete situation and experiences of life. A method has to be relevant to the course of the subject matter. In any good method, awareness and opportunities should be provided for the development of openness of mind, honesty of purpose, directness or straightforwardness of approach and an acceptance of responsibility for the thorough doing of the job.<sup>1</sup> The success of the method depends upon what Dewey calls the psychologization of the subject matter. To "psychologize"<sup>2</sup> the subject matter is to view it as an outgrowth of present activities and tendencies and this means that it should develop within the range and scope of the expanding consciousness of the child. This implies that the subject matter should be put before the child not in an abbreviated form of the one put before the adult but should take into consideration the experiences of the child. The child is to be treated not as an abbreviated adult but an organic personality.

The most important consideration in devising the curriculum is that the subject matter should proceed from direct activities having an immediate scope for realization.<sup>3</sup> This means that the school should be more connected with out-of-school experiences. This implies the projection in schools of the society we should like to have. The schools should provide extended opportunities for reproducing the situations of life.<sup>4</sup> This would necessitate the furnishing of schools with laboratories, shops, gardens, games and dramas. The physical equipments of the school should reproduce the concrete situations of social life and hence more actual materials and more appliances should be used. There has to be an extension of opportunities for actively participating in things. Educational activity is broader than mere physical and muscular movements. It comprehends aesthetic, intellectual and utilitarian interests. The activity program carried on in schools should foster the continuity of

<sup>1</sup> *Democracy and Education*, p. 211.

<sup>2</sup> *The School and the Child*, p. 40.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 413-14.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 182-83,-190.

experience which would result in a better control over one's self and the environment.<sup>1</sup> Thus the activities carried on in schools, shops, playgrounds, laboratories and workshops provide opportunities for intercourse, communication and cooperation. This facilitates the perception of connections between old and new experiences.

History should be taught in schools. It is essential to portray the course of social evolution and to perceive the structure and dynamics of the social world. It is true that we read the history of the past not because we are fond and enamoured of the past but because the past is the past of the present. The sociological approach to history saves it from being the mere chronicle of ancient deeds. History is resonant with a deep meaning and vital message.<sup>2</sup> The past is conserved in the shape of the present and for a dynamic sociological perspective<sup>3</sup> it is essential to have a grasp of economic and industrial aspects of human growth. It is necessary to lay emphasis on the social, economic and political forces which have contributed to the evolution of the people because, otherwise history degenerates into the biography of some chosen heroes. If history is taught in terms of the mechanics and dynamics of the evolution of civilization then the particular events are interpreted in terms of the whole social life. Thus it becomes easy to develop powers of observation and analysis. In one of his early books on education Dewey has outlined a scheme of history teaching.<sup>4</sup> The first period is concerned with generalized and simplified history. Children who are six year old should study the typical occupations of the people in the neighbourhood. Seven year old children can take up the evolution of invention and their effect on life. Eight year old children should be made familiar with the movement of exploration and discovery. Writing in the American context, Dewey would at this stage plead for the study of an outline study of the history of colonial America. The second period of history teaching would extend for three

<sup>1</sup> *The Philosophy of John Dewey*, p. 427.

<sup>2</sup> Dewey discusses the ethical import of history in *Educational Essays*, pp. 53-54.

<sup>3</sup> *The School and the Child*, pp. 95 ff.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 102-4.

years. In this period he pleads for a study of American history. In the third period he prescribed a study of the ancient beginnings of civilization. In this way the background of Western history is revealed. It is true that Dewey is dealing with specific reference to the United States. But his basic principle is clear and this has reference to the gradual extension of the area of historical investigations—from the neighbourhood to the country and from the country to the world. The important point is that pupils should not be brought up in a self-sufficient, narrow and parochial atmosphere. The study of world history extends the range of intellectual perspective. History is the science of the study of social interconnections and its moral significance lies in the cultivation of "socialized intelligence" or socially-oriented thinking.<sup>1</sup> If history studies social implications, geography provides the study of natural connections. Thus history and geography together reveal the context of present experiences and thereby serve to enlarge them.

Science is a vital means of social progress. The needs and demands of the social situation have been factors of great significance in the evolution of physics, chemistry, etc. The modern world is a creation of scientific ingenuity and methodology. Hence according to Dewey, science should have an important place in the curriculum.<sup>2</sup> But science also should be interpreted in terms of social activity and its interconnections with social evolution brought out. Science is important because it is the concrete realization of the application of the logical method. "Science is experience becoming rational." It supplies tools for the construction of new experiences with transformed meanings and hence it is to be a vital part of the curriculum.

But science does not have to be studied as a fixed body of rationally valid propositions. It is imperative to recognize the significance of the scientific method. Through the application of the scientific method of abstraction it is possible to eliminate the casual, temporary and particular elements of any novel experience and to study that as the illustration of a more permanent law or principle. This process of abstraction thus enables the utilization of the significant elements of one exper-

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<sup>1</sup> *Democracy and Education*, p. 254.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 256-70.

rience for the study and interpretation of other experiences. Generalization is another significant constituent of the scientific method. It means the application of abstract propositions to fresh specific cases. In this way the mind is trained in thinking in rational terms. Science has to be interpreted not as a mere body of knowledge of fixed validity and relevance but the scientific spirit of independent objective quest is essential. It has to be cultivated, however, in earlier life, otherwise, it remains as an appendix to one's mental armoury and is not translated into an all-pervasive attitude.

It is artificial to separate the study of science and the study of culture. Since the time of the Renaissance, an unholy separation has been operating between the humanistic branches of study and the naturalistic. There had been historical reasons for this separation. The attitude of early science was dualistic and mechanistic<sup>1</sup> and this was regarded as antithetical to humanism. Furthermore, the success of science aided the cause of capitalistic industry and this also detracted from its humanistic significance. But an enlarged intellectual perspective where there is place for the simultaneous recognition of the operation of reason and the diverse play of the emotions and affections of man can harmonize the claims both of science and humanistic culture. The first step in the creation of culture is "to bring to the consciousness of the new generation something of the potential significance of the life of today, to transmute it from outward fact into intelligent perception."<sup>2</sup> The old aristocratic culture was based on an escape from the realities of a struggling competitive world. It exalted the role of the leisured classes. But culture in the modern perspective should be consonant with realistic science and machine industry, instead of escaping from them. The advances in science and technology have imparted a new dimension of intelligence to industrial activities and thus have challenged the foundations of the Aristotelian separation of rational activity and manual activity. The important thing is the development of genuine experiences and these have both cognitive and active phases.

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<sup>1</sup> *Democracy and Education*, pp. 328-31.

<sup>2</sup> *Intelligence*, p. 728.

This will involve the framing of a system of studies where proper emphasis can be put both on the naturalistic and the humanistic aspects.

The advance of technology strengthens the case for vocational education. "An occupation is the only thing which balances the distinctive capacity of an individual with his social service... The only adequate training *for* occupations is training *through* occupations.....the educative process is its own end and that the only sufficient preparation for later responsibilities comes by making the most of immediately present life applies in full force to the vocational phases of education."<sup>1</sup> The problem, however, is not to make the schools subsidiary adjuncts to manufacture and commerce but to utilize "the factors of industry to make school life more active, more full of immediate meaning, more connected with out-of-school experience."<sup>2</sup>

Besides the specific technics and subjects studied, it is also important to note the importance of what Dewey calls "collateral learning."<sup>3</sup> This implies the formation of enduring attitudes of choices and preferences. This is more important in terms of the enrichment of the experiences of life than lessons in geography or history or language teaching. Perhaps the greatest acquisition from education is the desire for more education and growth. This can be fostered by participation in conjoint activities. Any attempt to impose externally the subject matter leads to the inhibition of free mental development. It is much more important to cultivate the spirit of endless quest for growth and learning than to amass external information. Hence the training of the attitude of the students in the appreciation of learning is more important than the devising of the curriculum. It is essential to make a revolt against the sovereign majesty of the external curriculum. It is imperative that the student population be initiated in the genuine appreciation of the transforming role of experiences. This will serve to impart an artistic quality to all education and check the external domination by the subject matter and also prepare the atmosphere where reflective processes can be

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<sup>1</sup> *Democracy and Education*, pp. 360-62.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 369.

<sup>3</sup> *Experience and Education*, p. 49.

encouraged in quest of novel and genuine experience which constitute the essence of all education.

## 6. Values and Ethics in Education

Values are of cardinal significance in life. They add to the qualitative richness of its content and thus they are the salt of civilization. The essence of value depends upon complete experience. In this sense valuation means a heightened and realistic appreciation of meaning. *Intrinsic* values are prized for their own sake because they add to the realization of the worth of life through selection and concentration.<sup>1</sup> There may also be *derived or instrumental* values whose significance depends upon being means to intrinsic values. The enjoyment of satisfaction through the culmination of desire in the realization of experience is the ultimate source of values. Experience is the source both of value and reality. But not all experiences which yield temporary immediate satisfaction can be regarded as value-impregnated. Dewey reacts against a purely subjectivist conception of values. According to him fancy or imagination or mere desire is not the source of values. The acceptance of the cardinal role of judgments is an important point in Dewey's philosophy of values. "To call an object a value is to assert that it satisfies or fulfils certain conditions."<sup>2</sup> Hence it is essential to integrate the study of values with the essence of life and education which is continuity of genuine growth. Education is the process of the achievement of a life of worth and rich qualitative significance. The process of living through genuine experience is an ultimate value. But this is not to be conceived as a final end to which the subject matter is subordinate as means but "it is the whole of which they are ingredients." Dewey has also provided some tentative points of view to which the work in schools contribute. These are efficiency, sociability, aesthetic taste or capacity, scientific achievement and conscientiousness.<sup>3</sup> These are specific realizations which form tastes and habits of preference and can also serve as standards of valuation. These five criteria have relevance for accelerating the social

<sup>1</sup> *Democracy and Education*, pp. 291-92.

<sup>2</sup> *The Philosophy of John Dewey*, pp. 433-34.

<sup>3</sup> *Democracy and Education*, pp. 285-86.

onward momentum. But as an experimental naturalist Dewey is opposed to the construction of an abstract hierarchy of ends and values with reference to some absolute transcendent good. There can be only concrete and specific values suited to the specific situational context in which a choice has to be made. The only ultimate value is the process of living. This is the supreme canon as well as the object of worth. Hence it is imperative to realize the unity and integrality of experience which is the essence of all harmonious life. Everything that contributes to this richness of central experience has relevance and worth attached to it. Anything that deters this process has to be eliminated. The concept of the unity of experience is a counterpoise to the prevalent practice of segregation and organization of values which results in assigning separate values to each study and consequently the curriculum in its entirety is made to appear as "the aggregation of segregated values."<sup>1</sup> In the framework of a democratic society values have to be formulated with references to the unity of experience and all subjects in the curriculum should reinforce the worth of each other because they all are factors of the growth of life.

Generally, morals are supposed to be a part of values which is a more comprehensive term. Dewey almost uses them as equivalents. "Morals is as wide as everything which affects values of human living."<sup>2</sup> ".....morals is not a theme by itself because it is not an episode nor department by itself. It marks the issue of all the converging faces of life."<sup>3</sup>

Dewey, in his ethical philosophy, starts with a critique of the formal rational ethics of Kant.<sup>4</sup> Kant had suspected all the empirical ends set by desire and had championed the necessity and universality of reason. The pure form of rational categorical imperative was the sole criterion of moral action. But, according to Dewey, it is not the business of the teacher to make the boys learn the maxim of the formal law of duty. His duty is "to get the children to realize what the general abstract demands of morality require in very special and concrete

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<sup>1</sup> *Democracy and Education*, p. 292.

<sup>2</sup> Quoted in *The Philosophy of John Dewey*, pp. 350-51.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>4</sup> *Educational Essays*, pp. 116-17.

instances, and to give them such an interest in these specific moral ends as will endow them with motor power."<sup>1</sup> If the teacher were to act on the Kantian maxim he would make the pupils either prigs or self-conscious in the bad sense of the term. Hegel, Green and Bradley had rejected the abstractness, the negativism and the formalism of Kantian ethics and had sanctioned the supremacy of an ethical code which teaches the conscious performance of the duties demanded by social and political institutions. As distinguished from Hegel and Bradley, Green, however, had agreed with Kant in stressing the necessity of disinterestedness and spontaneity in moral life. Dewey's critique of Kant from the standpoint of social ethics is analogous to the critique of the Hegelians. The real problem in making men moral is to provide opportunities for their expression and for the realization of their lives in the context of concrete social activities. Dewey feels that the pragmatic approach to morals can bridge the Kantian dualism of inner disposition versus deeds, or the separation between action proceeding from interest and action guided by the consciousness of pure principle.<sup>2</sup> Both these dualisms can be reconciled in an educational scheme where learning is regarded as the performance of socially-oriented activities and occupations which aim to utilize the existing materials for their purpose. Thus the social orientation and the accomplishment of conjoint activities which form the essence of Dewey's educational theory are also the key concepts in his philosophy of ethics.

The mere performance of socially significant activities is not ultimate, however. Moral life is realized only as the individual becomes conscious of the specific aims for the realization of which he is working and when he performs his work in a spirit of devotion. From the educational standpoint this means the transformation of the spontaneous and undeveloped capacities of the child into socially significant motives of genuine reconstruction and liberation of powers of intelligence. This implies the gradual training of the child in the use of judgment. For this, ideas have to be directed towards the accomplishment of ends and this involves a deliberate choice from among

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<sup>1</sup> *Educational Essays*, p. 117.

<sup>2</sup> *Democracy and Education*, p. 418.

alternative criteria of action. A good judgment is a sense of respective or proportionate values and this is expressed in terms of mastering a challenging situation. The worthwhile object is interest in the welfare of the community. The intellectual, practical and emotional interests of the community have to be served and opportunities for the advancement of social order and progress have to be utilized. This means that the school should be treated as the community in miniature and "the child ought to have exactly the same motives for right doing, and be judged by exactly the same standards in the school, as the adult in the wider social life to which he belongs."<sup>1</sup> There is thus, no more, to operate a separation between a transcendental moral teaching in the school and the compulsive demands of a social realism in the external world. According to Dewey the educative process is one with the moral process since the latter is a continuous passage of experience from worse to better. "The heart of the sociality of man is education."<sup>2</sup> Thus the moral is not a separate realm apart but is the motive of social action. "Discipline, culture, social efficiency, personal refinement, improvement of character are but phases of the growth of capacity nobly to share in such a balanced experience. And education is not a mere means to such a life. Education is such a life. To maintain capacity for such education is the essence of morals. For conscious life is a continual beginning afresh."<sup>3</sup>

## 7. Democracy and Education

Democracy is not merely a political formula of popular governance. It is a complete philosophy of life and education. It aims to liberate the energies and capacities of man so that he may freely participate in conjoint experiences and thereby extend the area of shared concerns. Democracy accepts the intrinsic valuational worth of every experience that leads to growth. This freedom of experience implies that social groups should also be free in their mutual intercourse. If the democratic criterion is further extended then freedom for experience

<sup>1</sup> *Educational Essays*, p. 37.

<sup>2</sup> *Intelligence*, p. 627.

<sup>3</sup> *Democracy and Education*, p. 417.

should be extended also in the international sphere. Thus the individuals, the groups and the nations must have their capacities liberated for extensive contacts with each other. The essence of democracy is the substitution of external authority and imposition by freer interaction and the realization of the significance of every individual and his aims and values. This requires that individuals should make themselves better agents for social service.

Dewey has tried to modify the traditional liberal theory, but although he had accepted the role of the planned intelligence of the community, he remained throughout his life firmly attached to the concept of freedom. Freedom is the essence of democracy. It connotes intelligent foresight, initiative, independence and judgment. "Freedom resides in the operations of intelligent observation and judgment by which a purpose is developed."<sup>1</sup> Its essence is the realization of the creative role of intelligence. In this sense it means the development of an attitude of curiosity and an eager acceptance of the demands and criteria of reason. The older conception of freedom as unhindered movement is not enough in the present circumstances. The powers of man for conjoint intelligent action have to be emancipated from the thraldom of custom, convention and arbitrary imposition of authority. But the existence and progress of society also does demand some form of social control, besides freedom. Dewey is opposed to authoritarian dictation from above. The ideal aim of education is the "creation of the power of self-control."<sup>2</sup> This self-control is the product of participation in activities of social relevance and worth. To the solution of the persistent problem of politics—how to reconcile freedom and control?—Dewey brings the canons of his experimental logic. "The basic control resides in the nature of the situation in which the young take part. In social situations the young have to refer their way of acting to what others are doing and make it fit in. This directs their attention to a common result, and gives an understanding common to the participants. For all mean the same thing, even when performing different acts. This

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<sup>1</sup> *Experience and Education*, p. 84.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 75.

common understanding of the means and ends of action is the essence of social control."<sup>1</sup>

Dewey is sincerely attached to the values of democracy. Hence he is critical of Plato's theory of education because the latter did not recognize the unique worth of individuals and hence had no conception of the multiple and various activities which may characterize individuals and social groups. Dewey pleads for the extension of democracy in all fields. He wants that public education should be provided for all children because thereby equality of educational opportunity would become a preliminary to the demand for opportunity in other fields. The school, as the democratic society in miniature, should realize the significance of the experiences, needs and interests of the child as a personality. Through participation in the shared activities of the school, the child gets a consciousness of his own significance and thus gradually conceives a world of valuable ends.

Democracy is the political analogue of the experimental method. The latter postulates the wide use of testing of hypothesis. Similarly democracy postulates full freedom of enquiry and it wants to solve social and political problems by means of enquiry and discussion. The schools, to conform to the democratic criterion, should be organized on the basis of the acceptance of the value of the actual experiences of the children and the latter should be encouraged to make adjustments through the method of conference and mutual give and take. The common point in democracy and the experimental methods is the recognition of the worth of experience and the liberating role of intelligence.

A rather unstressed aspect of the extension of democratic practices in schools will be to enhance the control of the actual teachers in the management of the school affairs.<sup>2</sup> Hitherto, the governing authorities and the superintendent and the principal have had the major share in school management. By this practice the school as a community suffers because it is deprived of being benefitted by the experience of a large body of persons who are in a position to impart and develop

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<sup>1</sup> *Democracy and Education*, p. 47.

<sup>2</sup> *Intelligence*, p. 717.

character and good judgment in the young. Hence every teacher should be given some regular opportunity, either directly or through representatives democratically chosen to "participate in the formation of the controlling aims, methods and materials of the schools of which he is a part."<sup>1</sup> This growing participation of the teachers in the formation of the policy of the school will enrich the latter because the wisdom, experience and initiative of a significant sector of the educated population will be brought to bear upon an important theme.

The schools should become guardians of academic freedom.<sup>2</sup> Intellectual or moral freedom is the basis of political freedom. Hence the schools should be living examples of the practice of freedom of enquiry, experimentation and intelligent communication. We are living in a complex and difficult world and the precious values of freedom are at stake and hence both the teachers and the students should vitalize the foundational values of democracy by imbibing into their lives and also transmitting to others, faith in the supremacy of academic freedom. Freedom is the base of civilization and it is essential that the spirit of unconstrained mental enquiry should pervade the organization, the curriculum-formation and the guidance of the schools. The students are the future leaders of civilization and it is imperative that they are imbued with faith, vitality and zest for the preservation of the democratic values of freedom of expression. An excessively heavy routine, the external imposition of studies and an undemocratic administrative set up in the schools warp the development of the personality of students. They tend to become pliable instruments of an authoritarian regime. Hence the students have to be early trained for the expression of their views against the opponents of democracy. The schools and the universities, thus, should become vital centres of freedom against the corrupting mechanism of routinized uniformity and arbitrary triviality.

### **8. Critique and Conclusion**

Dewey's faith in education is sincere and profound. He equates education with the growth of the increasing capacity to

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<sup>1</sup> *Intelligence*, p. 717.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 723.

perceive connections in the areas of experience. Genuine experience is the essence of life and it is imperative to introduce the element of intelligence in social activities. Education is the means of the general institution of intelligent action<sup>1</sup> and in this sense it is the vital agent in social change and transformation.<sup>2</sup>

Dewey repudiates the old conception of the individual as a person with his private mind and his isolated self. He accepts the social emergence of mind and personality as intelligent modes of organized responsive action. It is imperative to recognize the social approach to education. At present we find confusion and multiplicity of aims. It is essential to incorporate a social purpose in the entire scheme. There is no antagonism between the individuals and the society because the latter is only the individuals in their associated character. The individuals receive meaning through conjoint experiences. The child develops his personality by participating in social activities. Hence education as the means to the perpetuation of society should receive increasing importance. It is not possible today, to remain content with the ideals of development of inner quiet and beatitude in isolated monasteries and cloisters. As a sociological realist accepting the imperative role of social interactions, Dewey interprets education as a social living. The mind, self and personality of man are social emergents. Language as the medium of communication is also a social product. The moral conceptions of right and wrong also receive their definition in the situation of the community and hence a social approach has to be made to education.

The schools cannot remain neutral towards social forces and movements. A policy of quiet and silence indirectly amounts to the support of the *status quo*. But a recognition of the social significance of schools can transform them into intelligent guides of social change. Ours is a changing world and the schools can take note of the direction of scientific, technological and social advance and can be active agents in the elimination of socially deviant factors.

Dewey's social theory of education coupled with his logic of

<sup>1</sup> John Dewey, *The Quest for Certainty*, p. 240.

<sup>2</sup> *Intelligence*, p. 692.

experimental method has been quite influential in the development of modern educational practices. The greatest change has been in the recognition of the worth of the experiences of the child. The child is no longer regarded as a passive subject meant for the imposition of external information but is considered an active living being whose interests have to be stimulated not by external inducements but by participation in socially significant experiences. This kind of participation, if intelligently and devotedly engaged in, is a kind of moral experience. Thus instead of the old emphasis on mechanical memorizing of subject matter it is essential to stress the meaningful dimensions of the process of learning. By emphasizing these ideas, Dewey's writings have been influential in moulding the thought and practice of modern education in the U.S.A. and also elsewhere. Dewey has been one of significant leaders who have tried to introduce a more human touch in the processes of education. He has been a powerful influence in interpreting the school as a community for the realization of the significance of the immediate experiences and present opportunities of the child if he is to be a contributor to the march of the social process. His insistence on activities of diverse kinds in schools is also another aspect of his social theory of education. The self-renewal of society depends on education and the school should be treated as a community meant for the reproduction of those activities which the child will have to perform later in life. Hence ".....a clear conception of the meaning of 'social' as a function and test of education"<sup>1</sup> is essential. Only such a social theory of education can be suitable in the complex interdependence of the modern economic and industrial world.

The pragmatic method of instrumentalistic experimentation reacts against all kinds of mysticism, transcendentalism and absolutism. It is, rather, a method of action of trial and error and of the persistent testing and validating of hypotheses. It is difficult and painful and requires far greater energetic application for its success than the passive unthinking acquiescence in ideas whose sole sanctity lies in being part of the traditional body of wisdom associated with holy books, experts or priests.

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<sup>1</sup> *Democracy and Education*, p. 113.

But these dogmas cannot be regarded as worthwhile today. The phenomenal success of science is a testimony to the validity of its method and hence it is essential to extend the applications of the scientific procedure. But scientific experimentalism does not have to be construed into the mechanical outlook which postulated a gap between the scientific view and a humanistic approach. It is the chief merit of Dewey's educational philosophy that it has attempted to reconcile naturalism and humanism. It is true that man is continuous with nature but this does not imply the obscuration of the values and worth of the affections, aspirations and aims of man. Hence along with a persistent appeal for making the experimental methods all-pervasive, Dewey has simultaneously extended the claims of humanistic ethics. The advocacy of scientific method and humanistic ethics is the secret of the success of Dewey's educational theory. If he pleads for the use of the method of testing the hypotheses, he is also mindful and keenly aware of the role of the unique experiences of the child. Science does not remain for Dewey an impersonal gigantic monster dealing with unreal abstractions but is given a subtle human touch in the extensive significance added to the creative and transforming role of human experiences.

Democracy is the political and moral philosophy of education. If education is equivalent to genuine living, then democracy is the moral foundation of education. The essence of education is the extension of shared areas of meaningful action and this is also the essence of democracy. If experiences are significant processes, then by implication it follows that the greater the range and depth of experience, the more significant it is. There can be no rational justification for the exclusion of any group or class or nation from the area of conjoint participation in shared activities. In this way we subscribe to a philosophy of ever-widening area of experience. Thus both education and democracy emphasize the role of experiences and both plead for their extension. *Thus the quest for the three goals—scientific method, humanistic ethics and democratic theory—represents the great contribution of Dewey to educational theory.* The central stress is on intelligent action based on scientific methods,

performed by individuals whose experiences are meaningful and who do not accept artificial barriers of separation.

The supreme contribution of Dewey to a philosophy of education is the theory of scientific democratic humanism. Science is the foundation of democracy, because it has made possible the substitution of human labor by mechanical labor. It releases tremendous power of productivity and thus makes it possible to erect a regime of wide abundance and its equitable distribution. Hence science is a vital factor of social reconstruction. But science should be treated not merely as an additional subject of study along with the traditional curriculum. From the beginning of the education of the student, science has to be made an all-pervasive attitude of mind, a method of enquiry rather than a body of established conclusions of experts. The scientific society of the future would guarantee economic security and freedom. For this a wise planning of economic resources is essential. Dewey has never subscribed to the rampant *laissez faire* of the old individualism. He has modified liberalism in the direction of the acceptance of the theory of "planning for social ends."<sup>1</sup> But although he is careful to note down the potentialities of socio-economic planning, his ultimate faith in the supremacy of education is revealed in his statement that economic freedom is a means to cultural freedom. The school is the potential social organ for the cultural liberation of mankind. This cultural humanism needs to be reiterated because there is a danger that having liberated mankind from the crude dogmas and superstitions of the past, science may erect itself into another dogmatic structure. Hence a genuine humanism and a robust moral consciousness arising from the very logic of social action are essential. Cultural humanism does not have to be an external imposition but should proceed from the very atmosphere of conjoint experience. Whatever be the subjects of study, it is essential to stimulate the curiosity about how the specific achievements recorded were made possible. The methodology of action has also to be made clear. Furthermore, the relation of the past and the present has to be clarified.

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<sup>1</sup> Quoted in *The Philosophy of John Dewey*, p. 443.

In this way the pragmatic consideration for meeting the demands of the present can go together with the historical quest for the significance of the past. This scientific-cultural approach to the problems of school and education will alone release that "socialization of mind"<sup>1</sup> and that "socialized disposition"<sup>2</sup> which is the aim of all genuine experience. But at present this represents an ideal and not an actuality. On the basis of statistics it is possible to prepare a report on the effects of educational measures. "But the effect of education upon the development of a particular individual is, as far as foresight is concerned, still largely a matter of guesswork."<sup>3</sup> Our present technics for the modification of human nature in desired directions are limited. Hence "although schools abound, education as a controlled process of modification of disposition is hardly even in its infancy."<sup>4</sup>

I have said earlier that I regard Dewey's emphasis on scientific method and on humanistic ethics as very great contributions to educational theory. I feel inspired by his definition of democracy in terms of social and educational philosophy. He has been emphatic on defining democracy as a mental disposition developed in conjoint shared experiences of a socially serviceable character. He has thus challenged the attempt of some thinkers to narrow down democracy to a political connotation only. He has noted with a keen-vision that political democracy cannot succeed without the foundation of genuine psychological disposition.

But there are some elements in Dewey's educational theory which I fail to appreciate. Being a naturalist, Dewey has levelled a gigantic attack against all forms and types of dualism. The dualism of matter and mind, mind and body, labor and leisure, naturalistic studies and humanistic studies, society and individual, action and thought, are all supposed to be rooted in the class structure of society. In a sense, thus, he stresses a naturalistic monism of the continuity of experiences.

<sup>1</sup> *Democracy and Education*, p. 141.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 144.

<sup>3</sup> John Dewey's article on "Human Nature" in *Encyclopaedia of Social Sciences*, Vol. VII, p. 336.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*

But the attempt of Dewey to trace the class roots of all dualistic ideologies is fundamentally mistaken. It indicates the pragmatic way of approaching problems, in the bad sense of the term. This sociological explanation may appeal to us by its easy simplicity. But it is untenable. If dualism has its origin in the division of society into two classes, what is the explanation of pluralism? Did monism come into the theoretical consciousness of the people because there was only one class in society or a single mighty despot? How to explain, on the basis of Dewey's theory, the pluralism of the Vaisesikas and the Jainas? Why did Leibnitz uphold the theory of innumerable monads? Furthermore, we find that the operative consciousness of subject and object and of mind and matter is found even in the primitive communities in which there is no class division. Does Dewey think that the dualistic notion of mind and matter will cease to exist in the classless society of the future if it were to be realized? Moreover, the very conception of the division of society between two opposed groups of antagonistic interests is a mythical simplification and not a sociological truth. It is a slogan of the preacher, the propagandist and the agitator. Any application of modern statistical tools will reveal that there are numerous divisions and sub-divisions in society and the hypothesis of the existence of only two classes cannot be substantiated by empirical studies. Hence this attempt of Dewey to search for the roots of epistemological and psychological dualism in the duality of the social structure is an unnecessary and unverifiable hypothesis. Inspite of his lifelong hostility to the ideas of Marxian communism, this view of his, regarding the origins of ideologies, is a concealed concession to the empty generalizations of historical materialism.

Dewey is quite right in pleading for the wide use of the experimental methods of science in education. But at times the connection between experimental methods and democracy is not clear. True it is that both are opposed to the imposition of any absolutist authoritarianism and plead for tentative suggestions and hypotheses in place of rigid creeds. But I fail to see any connexion between the experimental method of science and the democratic cult of rampant majoritarianism.

The success of science is a vindication of the truth that one Archimedes or one Galileo or one Newton could be right and the conventions of the majority could be false. Democracy, to the contrary, is firmly committed to the absolutism of the wisdom of the fifty-one percent as against forty-nine percent. It may be interpreted as philosophy of life but in actual practice there is no other way to find out the democratic view except by the counting of heads. Rousseau tried to enshrine the concept of the incorruptible general will but even he could not provide any other better formula to find out the general will except the traditional method of counting of numbers. But there can be occasions of supreme contradiction between the logic of the experimental method and the logic of the brute majority. As a lifelong democrat Dewey was expected to discuss this problem more carefully. His most important work in educational theory is entitled *Democracy and Education*. He has grown rhetorical in his glorification of democracy as the theory of education. But I regard it as serious weakness of his theory that he has failed to reconcile the logical, scientific and reflective demands of an objectivist experimental method with the rigidly political and grossly numerical demands of democracy in practice. Regardless of Rousseau, Walt Whitman and Dewey, in practice, democracy cannot mean anything else than the acceptance of the verdict of the majority. If Dewey knew of any other secret method he has not given that out in his book. But if this majoritarianism is the essence of democratic practice, there can be numerous occasions in life and education when such democratic practices run counter to the criteria of an impartial and objective science. There is no use in being sentimental about things. Let us face the grim facts. If democracy means the superiority of numbers, I, for one, would strongly refuse to submit the canons of the advance of science and philosophy to the verdict of this majority.

There are great difficulties to be encountered in imparting religious education in schools.<sup>1</sup> The first difficulty is regarding the teachers. Who are going to teach religion? The teachers who already have a heavy load of teaching their respective

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<sup>1</sup> *Intelligence*, pp. 712-13.

subjects cannot be expected to shoulder this additional burden. If we are going to appoint a separate set of teachers, possibly we will have to have several sets for the several sects and denominations of religion. This may create a spirit of mutual discord and antagonism between boys belonging to different sects and possibly among the teaching staff too. From the standpoint of the sceptic there may arise the further difficulty that while the other subjects will be taught in a critical and detached spirit, religion with it recourse to the mystic and the transcendental will demand the obscuration of the rational faculty. But inspite of these difficulties I do not think that educational institutions should not impart religious education. For a naturalist like Dewey it may be enough to teach a system of values oriented to social betterment. He is satisfied with the acceptance of the spiritual import of science and democracy. But he has failed to notice that what he is saying is only the secularized version of old religious truths. In a sceptical and scientific age, religious values appear in a secularized form. But this secularization of values has been possible because for centuries religions had prepared the background for the reception of a valuational approach. It has been possible to get adherence to a system of social ethics because the tradition of religious values has been operating in the broader social universe for centuries. But if once there is the complete elimination of religious values, the stream from which science, socialism, humanism and democracy have been taking sustenance will dry down. A student population that has never been trained in the deeper values of the spirit will traverse the earth like Godless wrecks and at best sophisticated snobs. A mere philosophy of humanism and democracy cannot create the traditions of the flowering of a Krishna or a Buddha or a Gandhi. A mere gospel of live and let others live, which is only a formula of social expediency, cannot create that spirit of utter dedication and supreme self-abnegation for the betterment of mankind. Hence I consider the utter lack of any scheme of religious education as a serious drawback in Dewey's theory of education.

To sum up, there are three merits in Dewey's theory of education : (1) A *Social* theory of education as opposed to the stress on the isolated self of the individual. (2) A passionate

plea for the wide application of the *experimental* method in education. And (3) the conception of *democracy* as a social-psychological theory of the progressive extension of shared experiences. There are some weakness also in Dewey's theory of education : (1) The attempt to trace the roots of the dualistic approach in the twofold division of society is a mistake. (2) Scientific objectivity and veracity may be difficult of being reconciled with democracy which, in practice, means numerical majority. (3) The neglect of religious education may result in the destruction of the roots of humanistic values and social ethics.

## *Alfred North Whitehead*

Alfred North Whitehead (1861-1947) has won international eminence in diverse fields of intellectual disciplines. His work on *Universal Algebra* reveals his keen mathematical genius. The *Principia Mathematica* is a monumental work in the field of mathematical logic, prepared in collaboration with Bertrand Russell. As a philosophical cosmologist, Whitehead has won recognition by his work, *Process and Reality*.<sup>1</sup> His other philosophical books like *Science and the Modern World*<sup>2</sup> and *Adventures of Ideas* reveal insights into the history of European thought—philosophical, literary and scientific—and the evolution of human civilization. Even his smaller works like *Religion in the Making*,<sup>3</sup> *Nature and Life* and *The Function of Reason*<sup>4</sup> are full of suggestiveness and synthetic power. With a vast background in the fields of mathematics, philosophy and religion, Whitehead approaches the problems of education. His distinctive contribution in the field of pedagogics is his *The Aims of Education*.<sup>5</sup> Some of his other writings in the realm of educational theory are collected in his *Essays in Science and Philosophy*.<sup>6</sup> Whitehead's

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<sup>1</sup> A. N. Whitehead, *Process and Reality* (Gifford Lectures, 1927-28).

<sup>2</sup> A. N. Whitehead, *Science and the Modern World* (Lowell Lectures, 1925). All reference in this chapter are to the Pelican Mentor Books edition of May 1948.

<sup>3</sup> A. N. Whitehead, *Religion in the Making* (Lowell Lectures, 1926, delivered in the King's Chapel, Boston, February 1926).

<sup>4</sup> A. N. Whitehead, *The Function of Reason* (L. C. V. Foundation Lectures delivered at Princeton University. Princeton University Press, 1929).

<sup>5</sup> *The Aims of Education* (Macmillan, 1929), published as a Mentor Book. All references in this chapter are to the fifth printing of July 1954.

<sup>6</sup> A. N. Whitehead, *Essays in Science and Philosophy* (Rider & Co., 1948), p. 225.

educational ideas are entitled to critical study because besides being one of the greatest thinkers of the modern world, he was a leader in the field of liberal education. He himself was a teacher, first of mathematics and then of philosophy, and the ripe and mature experience of a long life are brought to bear upon his theoretical formulations in the field of education.

### **1. Philosophical Foundations of Education**

The fundamental cosmological ideas of Whitehead have considerably influenced his educational views. His proposition that the essence of education is that it should be "religious" in its basic orientation can only be properly grasped in the light of his view of religion as a supreme value wherein man realizes his solitariness and prepares for inner growth. He reacts against the dull scientific materialism and its mechanistic outlook and proposes to correct the inadequacies of scientific cosmology by supplementing that with the insights of poetry and religion. He constructs an organic philosophy and advocates a return to the life of the spirit. He is also a critic of unadulterated rationalism and believes in the immense cognitive significance of emotions, feelings and imagination. According to him reason and its critical apparatus are essential but not enough. What is essential is a full and comprehensive zest for mental vitality and an adequate philosophic growth. If any human group of civilization is satisfied with its fixed modes of abstract general propositions then it would fall a prey to dullness, inertia and stultification. Hence for the growth of civilization, locomotion of ideas resulting in the ever-growing critic of abstractions is highly essential and therefore in his scheme of education Whitehead has been emphatically asserting that boys must not be trained in the art of passive acceptance. From the very beginning of the educational career, stress has to be put upon a vital utilization of the knowledge attained. For a developing intellectual synthesis it is essential that boys should be given training in all the three curriculums—literary, scientific and technical. In order to grasp the entire significance of Whitehead's ideas and proposals in the field of education it is essential to have in mind some of the fundamental elements of his philosophy.

(a) **Creativity and God.** Creativity is the ultimate concept in the cosmology of Whitehead. God is the primordial non-temporal accident of this indeterminate creativity.<sup>1</sup> Whitehead repudiates the Kantian distinction between a world of things-in-themselves and the phenomenal or perceived world. The world perceived by the human sense-organs is the only world. There is no transcendent world beyond the one which is experienced by actual entities. The formative constituent elements of the temporal world are :

(i) The indeterminate supreme creativity whereby the world of actual objects receives its character of *temporal* passage to novelty. The never-ceasing emergence of novelty is dictated by the creativity.

(ii) The realm of ideal entities or forms or eternal potential objects, which in themselves are not actual but are such that they are exemplified in all the actual entities, according to some principle of graded relevance. These eternal objects which remind us of Platonic universals require to be "selected" for the eventuation of actual entities. The "ingression" of eternal objects is a never-ceasing process.

(iii) The actual but non-temporal entity called God. God transmutes the indetermination of creativity into determinate freedom. God is that principle of limitation or concretion which makes possible the conjunction of the relevant eternal object and the relevant actual entities for the emergence of the novel actual entity.

There are four dominant conceptions of God in the history of religions and philosophy.<sup>2</sup> First there is the metaphysical principle of God as the unmoved mover in Aristotle. Second, the Islamic conception of God as an imperial potentate. Third, the Jewish prophets accepted a God who can be regarded as a personification of moral energy. Finally, there is the early Christian conception of God as saviour, the fellow-sufferer and companion. In this scheme of fourfold categorization Whitehead shows his emotional leanings in favor of the Christian view. He is mistaken, however, in holding the opinion that

<sup>1</sup> Whitehead, *Process and Reality*, p. 11.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 519-20.

Buddhism also believes in God as the unmoved mover.<sup>1</sup> The *primordial* nature of God is his unlimited conceptual realization of the absolute wealth of potentiality. In this aspect, he is not *before* all creation, but *with* all creation. The *consequent* nature of God is the ever-changing temporal world become everlasting by its objective immortality in God.

It is essential to have this notion of God in mind to appreciate Whitehead's ideas on education. Education is the supreme art of maintaining and conserving the zest for life. Hope, faith and optimism are the great gifts of education. But at a philosophical level the source of this zest for life is God. Whitehead says : "Throughout the perishing occasions in the life of each temporal creature, the inward source of distaste or of refreshment, the judge arising out of the very nature of things, redeemer or Goddess of mischief, is the transformation of itself, everlasting in the Being of God. In this way, the insistent craving is justified—the insistent craving that zest for existence be refreshed by the ever-present, unsading importance of our immediate actions, which perish and yet live for evermore."<sup>2</sup> The zest for life receives its dominant impetus from the love of God for the world—his particular providence for particular occasions.

(b) *The Concept of Process.* As an educational philosopher Whitehead attacks the passive uncritical acquiescence of received traditions. He harps upon the necessity of the revolt against inert ideas. He stresses change and dynamism in the intellectual processes. I do not think that it will be far-fetched if I correlate this stress on dynamic moving ideas and notions with Whitehead's cosmological ideas regarding process. Whitehead accepts the validity of the attacks of modern physics against the old conception of matter as substance having qualities. What is real is not the immutable or mobile substance but the constantly pulsating energetic process. Only movement or process or sets of agitations are real. There is no substance. The attacks of the relativity theory in physics against the old absolutist conceptions of space and time as receptacles wherein bits of matter keep moving, have resulted

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<sup>1</sup> *Process and Reality*, pp. 520, 519.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 533.

in the theory of a four-dimensional space-time. But although revolutionary changes have occurred in the domain of physics, we still continue to accept the old Aristotelian logical categories of substance and attribute or subject-predicate relationships. The Newtonian conception of simple location of physical bodies and the Human view of "pure sensations" should now be replaced by the assertion of an interconnected network of events. The framework of the universe is a pattern of the process of events. This network of events is thoroughly sensitive to the dynamic reciprocal influence of the related things upon each other. This relation among things constitutes something like a "feeling" if such an emotional term can be applied in this context. The actual entity thus is a "prehensive occasion", meaning thereby, that it consists of all those dynamic interconnections with other things into which it enters. Whitehead pleads for the incorporation of new dynamic categories which will be more faithful to the portrayal of the fluxional character of the universal process.

(c) *Practical Reason and Speculative Reason.* Whitehead is in favor of a thorough training of the mind in the use of ideas. An understanding of the significance of this statement necessitates the study of the nature of mind. Due to the influences of Descartes, Spinoza and Hegel there is a tendency in modern thought to overrate the significance of reason. Even reality is regarded as rational. Whitehead regards it as fallacious that we should overemphasize the role of conscious reason. Consciousness is only a highly sophisticated later phase of experience. There is a variety of grades of effectiveness of morality. Even the social habits of animals give evidence of flashes of mentality in the past which have degenerated into physical habits. In the case of higher mammals and man there is clear evidence of habitually effective mentality. There has been a historical evolution of experience, and conceptual experience of the conscious rationalistic type is only one variable ingredient of life. Whitehead accepts the notion of the evolution of reason. Human reason has evolved in the process of the pragmatic growth of responses to the stimulating challenge of the environment. Modern thought is unwise in minimizing the role of primitive feelings, emotions and intuitions. White-

head pleads for the critique of these faculties and sources of knowledge for the sake of a synthetic comprehensive epistemology.

There are two functions of reason.<sup>1</sup> Practical reason seeks immediate methods and criteria of action. Its history goes back to animal life and its life-span can be measured in terms of millions of years. It is concerned with piecemeal discoveries in the pursuit of the art of existence. In this way the upward trend of animal evolution is fostered. Theoretical reason is of a speculative character and it seeks a synthetic understanding of the processes of the cosmos. Plato can be regarded as a symbol of this disinterested play of speculative reason. The scientific quest for an understanding of the world is rooted in this kind of reason. Reason is the directing force in the march of civilization and its function is to make judgments upon flashes of novelty.<sup>2</sup> Novelty is the salt of civilization because otherwise blind repetitive cycles will lead to utter decadence. But novelty should not be equated with the sheer splendours of anarchic appetitions. Reason civilizes the brute force of anarchic appetition and thus it has a vital role in the history of civilization.<sup>3</sup> The Greeks made monumental contributions to the growth of European civilization because they questioned everything. They had genuine interest in diverse kinds of knowledge. By the play of reason they attempted to attain truth of the highest generality and they conceptualized their formulations in terms of clear and logically consistent definitions.<sup>4</sup> If Plato represents the passion for truth of the highest generality, Aristotle stands for neat, clear-cut terms and concepts and definitions. The systematic definiteness and exactness obtained in the philosophical abstractions of the Greeks have been significant contribution to the growth of the European mind. Whitehead, himself, had a Platonic passion for systematic metaphysics built upon the foundation of inclusive generalized propositions. The speculative interest in the contemplation of abstract schemes of morphologies is singularly essential, according to him. He traces the decline of Asiatic

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<sup>1</sup> *The Function of Reason*, pp. 6-8, 31-32.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 15.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 28.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 66-67.

civilizations to the exhaustion of their fund of general ideas and their consequent tendency to capitalize only the past stock.<sup>1</sup> The speculative curiosity demolishing the pyramids of settled convictions is the source of novelties which nourish civilization. According to Whitehead, the salvation of human civilization is in this process of incessant transcendence of the mere immediate facts and in building thought-systems for the understanding of the facts of the present and the future.<sup>2</sup>

But the building of speculative abstract morphologies is not the monopolistic function of reason. Whitehead is emphatic in stating that the insights treasured in poetry and religion are also immensely significant. Nothing can achieve a relative degree of stable permanence in the history of human thought unless it incorporates some essential ingredient of truth in it. Religion and poetry have been powerful and persistent factors in the evolution of culture. Hence emotions, imaginations and feelings are also to be utilized in building the schemes of abstract ideas. Whitehead says : "Consciousness is no necessary element in mental experience. The lowest form of mental experience is blind urge towards a form of experience... In its essence, mentality is the urge towards some vacuous definiteness, to include it in matter-of-fact which is non-vacuous enjoyment. This urge is appetition. It is emotional purpose, it is agency."<sup>3</sup> Whitehead's critique of rationalism and his view that consciousness does not constitute the totality of experience are full of pregnant consequences for the future development of philosophic thought because under the spell of science there is a marked tendency to overrate the potency of reason. Reason is potent but is not enough for providing a complete picture of the universe. Whitehead believes in the conception of continuity and interconnectedness. Since flux is the ultimate real, hence there can be no question of detached isolated structures. What appears as isolated only indicates the achievement of relative permanence of its ingredients. In consonance with his philosophy of the flux as the real, Whitehead abolishes the concept of a detached mind. He says : "The philosophy of organism

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<sup>1</sup> *The Function of Reason*, p. 58.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 60.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 26.

abolishes the detached mind. Mental activity is one of the modes of feeling belonging to all actual entities in some degree, but only amounting to conscious intellectuality in some actual entities. This higher grade of mental activity is the intellectual self-analysis of the entity in an earlier stage of incompleteness, effected by intellectual feelings produced in a later stage of concrescence."<sup>1</sup>

Whitehead's view that mental experience is more extensive than the field of rational conceptualism can have great educational implications. It will disillusion men of the mirage of mere logical training. It will advocate the significance of emotional culture through education in literary classics and perhaps also in religious scriptures because although some of the conclusions of the classics and the scriptures may not be amenable to the scientific reason, still they do certainly incorporate truths of essential worth for the perfection of human character and values.

(d) ***Truth, Beauty, Adventure, Art and Peace.*** The secret of the growth of human civilizations lies in the quest of ever-enlarging perfections. The dogmatic attachment to any rigid scheme results in petrification. According to Whitehead, a civilized society should exhibit five qualities : truth, beauty, adventure, art and peace.<sup>2</sup> In the domains of both science and religion, progress consists in the framing of concepts and in discarding inadequate abstractions and metaphors. The essence of truth consists in evolving concepts which are deeply reflective of the roots of reality.

Beauty is the mutual adaptation of the several factors in an occasion of experience. The technology of the universe is directed to the production of beauty. Beauty revealed through the spontaneity of the novel individual occasions is a factor in the future of the universe which is conditioned by the imminence of the past. An original power of effectiveness belongs to the essence of each actual occasion and this is the source of beauty. The perfect efflorescence of beauty is found in God who is the measure of the aesthetic consistency of the world.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Process and Reality*, p. 88.

<sup>2</sup> *The Adventure of Ideas*, p. 353.

<sup>3</sup> *Religion in the Making*, p. 86.

Whitehead, at least partially, seems to accept the conception of infinite beauty as advocated in Plato's *Symposium*. He believes that aesthetic harmony stands before the universe as a dominant ideal moulding the general flux in its haphazard progress towards finer, subtler issues. Aesthetic harmony and consistency have a power of elevating the human being.

Art has an immense potency for the fertilization of the soul. Great art is the arrangement of the environment in a way capable of providing the human soul vivid but transient values. But besides being a source of immediate transient enjoyment and refreshment, art adds to the permanent richness of the soul's positive self-attainment because it provides a discipline of the inmost being. Hence Whitehead stresses the cultivation of habits of aesthetic apprehension by increasing the depths of individuality. Individualized aesthetic emergent value is of creative character and efficacy. The work of art is a noble message from the unseen and it provides solace to the human race amidst the stresses and frustrations of tragic existence.

Whitehead offers an interpretation of peace which goes beyond its mere political significance. Peace does not mean the negative conception of anesthesia. It has a positive character of broadening of feeling due to the emergence of some deep metaphysical insight. "Peace carries with it a surpassing of personality. There is an inversion of relative values. It is primarily a trust in the efficacy of beauty..... ....Its emotional effect is the subsidence of turbulence which inhibits. More accurately, it preserves the springs of energy, and at the same time masters them for the avoidance of paralysing distractions .....Peace is self-control at its widest.....Peace is so essential for civilization. It is the barrier against narrowness. One of its fruits is that passion whose existence Hume denied, the love of mankind as such." Amidst the inevitable tragedies of life, peace is the intuition of permanence. It results in the purification of emotions.

A key concept in Whitehead's philosophy of civilization is adventure. He is opposed to all kinds of self-complaiscent acceptance of static values and formulas. Adventure symbolises the youthful quest for more vitality and more perfection. According to Whitehead, a successful civilization is founded

upon the adventure toward novelty. Hence he says : "A race preserves its vigour so long as it harbours a real contrast between what has been and what may be; and so long as it is nerved by the vigour to adventure beyond the safeties of the past. Without adventure civilization is in full decay.....But adventures are to be adventurous. Thus a passive knowledge of the past loses the whole value of its message. A living civilization requires learning; but it lies beyond it." The vitality of a civilization is dependent upon its capacity for fresh experiments guided by the spirit of adventure. Only then it is possible to arrest the corrosive forces of staleness, repetitive inertia and the lowering of vivid apprehensions. Orthodoxy and convention are opposed to the daring flights of adventure.

Whitehead does not specifically state that these five fundamental values of truth, beauty, adventure, art and peace are to be the goals of education. But although he does not make direct statements to this effect, still his revolt against inert ideas and his plans to link up liberal and classical curriculum with the scientific and technical curriculum would definitely imply these values. He concludes his essay entitled "Technical Education, and its Relation to Science and Literature" thus : "Our forefathers in the dark ages saved themselves by embodying high ideals in great organizations. It is our task, without servile imitation, boldly to exercise our creative energies."<sup>1</sup> Concluding his essay entitled "The Rhythmic Claims of Freedom and Discipline," Whitehead says : "I have no doubt that unless we can meet the new age with new methods, to sustain for our populations the life of spirit, sooner or later, amid some savage outbreak of defeated longings, the fate of Russia will be the fate of England."<sup>2</sup> These quotations are enough to indicate that Whitehead is keenly interested in linking his educational aims to the persistent ideals of human civilization. Hence I urge that in a consideration of Whitehead's philosophy of education, we are thoroughly justified in asserting that the fivesfold values of civilization—truth, beauty, adventure, art and peace—can also be regarded as the fundamental goals of education.

<sup>1</sup> *The Aims of Education*, p. 68.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 52.

The aims of education cannot be separated from the goals of civilization.

In our studies of the cosmological foundations of education we have analyzed, so far, the concepts of God, reason and civilization. The concept of God has vital connexions with the theme of religious education. The concept of reason is integrally connected with the problems of the mathematical curriculum and the teaching of science and technology. The problems of civilization are integral to a study of the environmental context of education and they can also provide individual and social goals for action. Whitehead is very emphatic in his view that the thorough and systematic grasp of any subject involves a study of the explicit or implicit scheme of speculative ideas of the writer. Hence I do not think that I have to be apologetic in having provided an introductory view of the relevant cosmological ideas of Whitehead in a study of his educational philosophy.

## 2. The Aims of Education

(a) *Life and Education.* Education does not consist in the transmission of certain sets of external information about different subjects but is oriented to developing the intellect and character of man in order to enable him to adjust successfully to the environment. The diverse activities of man in pursuit of this aim are to be lit up by active wisdom. Hence it can be said that the fundamental ideal of education is a training and discipline for life. There is not much gain from brooding over the splendours and glamours of the past, nor is empty futuristic Utopianism of much avail. The insistent demands of the immediate present have to be met if the maximum fulfilment of human life is the desired objective. The values of the immediate present life should be realized and experienced. There is no problem of values in the inanimate structures. Human life alone has valuational significance. The present contains the essence of the past and the potentialities of the future and hence human life has to be conceived in terms of the immediate actualization of worth. The essence of the realization of values relevant to human life consists in the congruent conjunction of the materials so that a certain immediate novel individuality is

realized. "Life implies the absolute, individual self-enjoyment arising out of the process of appropriation."<sup>1</sup> Life is the enjoyment of emotion consequent upon the relevant and fruitful prehension of the complex data presented by physical nature. Hence it is evident that education is a very difficult art because it is a preparation for the enjoyment of life. It includes the art of *excluding* the irrelevant factors and the art of *including* the relevant ones for the creative and absolute self-enjoyment of the processes of nature and human existence. Whitehead says : ".....life is a passage from physical order to pure mental originality, and from pure mental originality to canalized mental originality. It must also be noted that the pure mental originality works by the canalization of relevance arising from the primordial nature of God."<sup>2</sup> If education is to be a preparation for the comprehension and enjoyment of life it is bound to involve arduous labours. It entails the necessity of constant endeavours for the attainment of the awareness of the truth that the essential spring of all growth is within oneself. The history of science manifests to the student the transforming power of ideas. The teaching of aesthetic, literary and cultural subjects indicates the power of ideas for imparting the sense of immediate beauty. In the higher fields of education speculative philosophy demonstrates the structural harmony of ideas. But all this knowledge and aesthetic satisfaction has to be made relevant to human life. In a word, it can be said that the central theme of education is life. Hence it is vitally essential that the abstract generalizations and conceptual formulas of science and philosophy should be made relevant to the concrete enjoyment of human life. The growth of general ideas is a later acquisition of the human race in its process of growth. Still, it is essential that the relevance of general ideas for the particular, concrete and novel immediacy of human life should be understood. This implies that education must develop the powers of initiative in the student population. There should be initiative in thought, initiative in the pragmatic process of handling the environment and there should be the imagi-

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<sup>1</sup> Whitehead, *Nature and Life*, (Cambridge, 1934), p. 58.

<sup>2</sup> *Process and Reality*, p. 164.

native initiative of art. This power of dynamic initiative for the enhancement of the richness of human life is a necessary counterpoise to the exclusive bookishness of the scholastic world which is victim to intellectual confusion consequent upon the disorders produced by the storage of undigested ideas of others. It is essential, therefore, that educational training should aim at eliciting our concrete apprehensions. The best formula for an education for life is that there should be a blending of abstract thought and concrete action. Hence Whitehead says : ".....mankind is born for action; it is the very breath of his life that he should be doing something. The aim of education is the marriage of thought and action—that action should be controlled by thought and thought should issue in action."<sup>1</sup> The present is an age of what Mannheim called "fundamental equalization". Hence in the context of the growth of democracy we shall more and more need an education which is suited to the immediate lives of people as citizens and as workers.

(b) *Religion and Education.* Since education is for the comprehension of life, it is essential that the perfection of human nature should be attained. Science provides the framework for order realized in external nature. But the old Greek philosophers were in quest of the values of harmony and virtue realized in the psychic structure of man. Religion is oriented to the realization of dominant inclusive universal values. It is necessary that although science and religion may be studied apart "they must be lived together in the one life of the individual." Whitehead accepts the transforming power of religion. Religious beliefs, if sincerely adhered to, have the power of cleansing our inward parts. Religious truth deals with values and it can bring "into our consciousness that permanent side of the universe which we can care for."<sup>2</sup> A penetrating sincerity is the basic religious virtue. Religion, of course, has a social and institutionalized character but it has also a fundamentally private character and is concerned with what man does with his own solitariness. "Religion is the art and theory of the internal life of man, so far as it depends on the man himself and

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<sup>1</sup> *Essays in Science and Philosophy*, p. 127.

<sup>2</sup> *Religion in the Making*, p. 110.

on what is permanent in the nature of things."<sup>1</sup> It insists that the world is a mutually adjusted disposition of things, issuing in a value for its own sake. The final conception of religion postulates a wisdom in the nature of things, from which flow our direction of practice, and our possibility of the theoretical analysis of fact. Hence Whitehead subscribes to the old theory of educational ideal which has been present throughout the centuries, that education should be religious in its essence but he is careful to maintain that religious education should not be identified with any dogmatic or scholastic sacerdotalism. "A religious education is an education which inculcates duty and reverence. Duty arises from our potential control over the course of events. Where attainable knowledge could have changed the issue, ignorance has the guilt of vice. And the foundation of reverence is this perception, that the present holds within itself the complete sum of existence, backwards and forwards, that whole amplitude of time which is eternity."<sup>2</sup> Whitehead thus inculcates a moral interpretation of religion. This moral conception is oriented to the comprehension of life and it also postulates the study of science because science alone can provide the potential control over the course of physical events. If life has to be understood and developed it is essential that the knowledge of science should be combined with the conception of the dignity of the human being because the latter is the medium of the transition of the worth of the past into the verities of the future. Thus Whitehead's statement that the essence of education is that it should be religious is only a commentary on his view that education has to be oriented to life. For the perfection of human life we need science, values and religion. Throughout the educational career of a man, the fundamental organizing conception has to be life, which consists in the process of unification of the discordant data for the realization of novel individuality.

(c) *Values and Education.* The realization of novel individuality in life implies a theory of the attainment of values. In Whitehead's philosophy, organism replaces the

<sup>1</sup> *Religion in the Making*, p. 6.

<sup>2</sup> *The Aims of Education*, p. 26.

old concept of matter and moreover, mind is conceived to be a function of the organism. An organism is the realization of a definite shape of value. Our bodily event is an unusually complex type of organism and consequently includes cognition. Value is the word for the intrinsic reality of an event.<sup>1</sup> Value is inherent in activity itself. There is no such thing as value in itself. The emergence of any actual value depends on the exclusion of neutralizing and irrelevant actual entities. Our aesthetic emotions provide us with vivid apprehensions of value. Any attempt to destroy their operative efficacy leads to the neutralization of the entire scheme of spiritual apprehensions. The purpose of God in the world is the process of limitation.<sup>2</sup> A mere arithmetical addition of all actual entities would mean the neutralization of all definiteness and the production of dull repetition. Value, on the other hand, depends on the actual harmonious shaping of attainment. "The sense of worth beyond itself is immediately enjoyed as an overpowering element in the individual self-attainment."<sup>3</sup> Whitehead is emphatic in his view that knowledge is a value. "This knowledge-value is the issue of the full character of the creativity into the creature world. There is nothing in the creativity which fails to issue into the actual world. Thus the creativity with a purpose issues into the mental creature conscious of an ideal."<sup>4</sup> This conception of knowledge-value is of great importance in Whitehead's philosophy of education. A sense of value depends on the sense of importance. The rise of science, art, religion and morality is due to the sense of value within the structure of the human being. A dominant desire to enshrine the sense of value in life is responsible for the growth of knowledge. Thus value is the ultimate motive power of the development of knowledge. There are diverse forms of this sense of value. First, Plato's view that philosophy has its genesis in the sense of wonder refers to a sense of value. Secondly, the disinterested curiosity of science for the comprehension of the universe is also integrally related to this

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<sup>1</sup> *Religion in the Making*, p. 87.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>3</sup> *Process and Reality*, p. 531.

<sup>4</sup> *Religion in the Making*, p. 105.

sense of value. Thirdly, the moral attitude of reverence for life is only a different form of this sense of value. Fourthly, the religious sense of worship and the mystic desire of merging personality in something beyond itself are also valuational in essence. Hence Whitehead says : "God is that function in the world by reason of which our purposes are directed to ends which in our own consciousness are impartial as to our own interests. He is that element in life by virtue of which judgment stretches beyond facts of existence to values of existence. He is that element in virtue of which our purposes extend beyond values for ourselves to values for others. He is that element in virtue of which the attainment of such a value for others transforms itself into value for ourselves." Without this comprehensive sense of value, life degenerates into the static passivity of lower types of existence. Only a deep regard for value can impart that vision of greatness<sup>1</sup> which is the foundation of moral life. Only a sense of the attainment of something great in life can prevent a man from stooping low or from compromising with the powers of evil. It is essential that education should inculcate this sense of value in the young. The traditional educational systems and methods are defective to the extent that they neglect the diverse and multiple play of emergent values.<sup>2</sup> They are concerned with verbal analysis on a cognitional plane and they aim at the acquisition of catechistic formulas. There is a neglect of the faculty of concrete prehension of immediate facts in their numerous diversifications and thereby they become obtuse to the aspect of emergent values in concrete actual situations. Hence Whitehead pleads for an intuitional apprehension of the variety of diverse emergent values in all their vividness. The values of the mere pragmatist are gross, the values of the mere scholastic are thin and specialized. It is essential to appreciate the infinite variety of vivid values achieved by an organism in its proper environment.

<sup>1</sup> For Whitehead's emphasis on 'habitual vision of greatness', see K. G. Collier, *The Social Purpose of Education* (London, Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1959), pp. 102-3.

<sup>2</sup> *Science and the Modern World*, pp. 197-98.

(d) *Wisdom and Education.* The stress on the orientations towards life, religion and values indicates that Whitehead has a comprehensive conception of the aims and ideals of education. This same comprehensiveness is indicated when he says that knowledge should be transmuted into wisdom. The ancient systems of thought stressed divine wisdom, while in modern days there is great preoccupation with text book knowledge.<sup>1</sup> It is necessary that the acquirement of facts should be guided by some principles. Knowledge, in order to be systematic and concrete, requires that it should be applied in practice. It is not valid to maintain that students should first learn facts and then should engage in their application. It is a psychological error. Throughout the process of learning, the process of application should also be concurrently present. In fact applications are part of knowledge. Unapplied knowledge is knowledge shorn of its meaning. Boys derive the joy of creative discovery when there is the marriage of thought and action. Knowledge grows by a series of reactions against the reflections upon the materials and heritage of the past. In this sense it is possible to say that knowledge is the synthesis of the reminiscence of the old experiences and the concrete reactions of the immediate actual occasions to those past experiences.<sup>2</sup> This stress on an interaction between the intellectual heritage and the experiencing mechanism shows that knowledge can never be passive. The knowing subject is a part of the world and his reactions represent a vital element for its transformation. This process of cognitive reaction would indicate that knowledge is not a static fixed iron-safe wherein concrete bits of information and facts are stored. We have to emphasize the diverse technics through which knowledge can be comprehensively utilized. Hence the novel application of knowledge has to be a cardinal principle in the pedagogical process. The novel consequences following from knowledge have to be integrally connected with the fundamental presuppositions of knowledge. Knowledge, thus conceived and comprehended, becomes an instrument of life and acquires a great valuational character. The

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<sup>1</sup> *The Aims of Education*, p. 40.

<sup>2</sup> *Essays in Science and Philosophy*, p. 149.

processes of the discovery of knowledge have a miraculous history of their own and not only the finished formulated shape of knowledge but its entire phenomenological structure assumes an aspect of aesthetic satisfaction. It is this comprehensive dimension of knowledge that Whitehead regards as wisdom. Wisdom adds value to bare experience. Whitehead says : "You cannot be wise without some basis of knowledge; but you may easily acquire knowledge and remain bare of wisdom. Now wisdom is the way in which knowledge is held. It concerns the handling of knowledge, its selection for the determination of relevant issues, its employment to add value to our immediate experience. This mastery of knowledge which is wisdom, is the most intimate freedom obtainable. The ancients saw clearly—more clearly than we do—the necessity for dominating knowledge by wisdom."<sup>1</sup> It is essential that knowledge should be transformed into wisdom. Wisdom is the mature perfection of knowledge. It is more than intellectual alertness. "Power follows wisdom, because nature unlocks its secrets to the wise and dowers the temperate with zest and energy. Wisdom should be more than intellectual acuteness. It includes reverence and sympathy, and a recognition of those limitations which bound all human endeavor."<sup>2</sup> The insight of the Greeks that the only way to get wisdom is to love it (*Philo*=love, *sophia*=knowledge or wisdom) is full of meaning when we are attempting to plan a big democratic system in India. It is essential to realize that comprehensive intellectual experience culminating in the attainment of wisdom involves a transcendence of mere verbal formulas. It involves clashes of emotion and unspoken revelations of the nature of things. "Revelation is the primary characterization of the process of knowing..... Revelation is the enlargement of clarity."<sup>3</sup>.

Whitehead also analyses the technics of acquiring wisdom in this comprehensive sense. Education is the gateway for the grasp of the immensity of the cosmic panorama. If this purpose is to be realized, science, philosophy and religion have to be more than mere speculative sources of delight. There should

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<sup>1</sup> *The Aims of Education*, p. 41.

<sup>2</sup> *Essays in Science and Philosophy*, p. 125.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 159-60.

be a harmony between cognitive awareness and instrumental activity. "Existence is activity ever merging into the future. The aim at philosophic understanding is the aim at piercing the blindness of activity in respect to its transcendent functions."<sup>1</sup> Whitehead emphatically repudiates the notion of mind as a passive substance. He regards it as a dangerous, erroneous and fatal conception. The mind is never passive; it is a perpetual activity—delicate, receptive and responsive to stimulus. The logical implication from the conception of mind as a dynamic energetic stuff is that ideas should be also active and in perpetual process of being thoroughly handled and utilized. Thus one of the main problems of education is a revolt against inert passive ideas. Generalizations, howsoever brilliant, will not suffice. It is essential to grasp the thorough applications of those general propositions and formulated inductions.

(e) *Whitehead's Revolt against Inert Ideas.* Whitehead's revolt against inert ideas is one of the dominant and recurrent themes in his educational philosophy. He is immensely critical of "the horrible burden of inert ideas."<sup>2</sup> He states that every great intellectual revolution has been a passionate protest against inert ideas. He is repelled by the craving for printed books without the exercise of thought upon the material. It is essential to exercise the thinking and the imaginative faculties as one reads. Reading without thought is as bad as drink, if not worse. At the beginning of the present century there was dissatisfaction in educational circles because the subjects in the curriculum were taught as inadequate bits and segments and no attempt was made to correlate and integrate the knowledge attained. Whitehead's revolt against inert ideas implies a great reaction against the plethora of half-digested knowledge and the uncritical reception of disparate ideas. Hence he issues two educational commandments : (i) "Do not teach too many subjects" and (ii) "What you teach, teach thoroughly."<sup>3</sup> It is essential to utilize particular ideas by connecting them with a broad scheme of general ideas. "From the very beginning of his education, the child should experience the joy of discovery.

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<sup>1</sup> *Nature and Life*, p. 96.

<sup>2</sup> *The Aims of Education*, p. 13.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 14.

The discovery which he has to make, is that general ideas give an understanding of that stream of events which pours through his life, which is his life...By utilizing an idea, I mean relating it to that stream, compounded of sense perceptions, feelings, hopes, desires and of mental activities adjusting thought to thought, which forms our life."<sup>1</sup> There is every chance that the majority of pupils may become victims of the habit of relishing the stupefying charms of passive reception of ideas. To cure this, it is essential that the pupils should be entrusted with definite tasks and problems. Vague generalities are useless. Facts should be illustrated by general ideas and abstract propositions should find application in the complex texture of particular facts as revealed in concrete occasions. In this way it is possible to build up the disciplined power of accurately controlled thought. Thought thus ceases to be associated with the pain and difficulties which ordinarily accompany it, in its processes of emergence. This welding together of theories and facts makes the art of pedagogy interesting and pupils experience a sense of exhilaration. The pupils thus receive general propositions revealed through facts instead of committing to memory random formularized generalizations.

Another aspect of Whitehead's revolt against acquiescence in passive inert ideas is his stress on the use of imagination in the pedagogical process. At an epistemological level, Whitehead is acutely aware of the limitations of rationalism. As a speculative philosopher, he upholds the method of imaginative rationalization. Religion is an illustration of this method because it (religion) connects the generality of philosophy with the emotion of man. It (religion) infuses into the insistent particularity of emotion that non-temporal generality which primarily belongs to conceptual thought alone.<sup>2</sup> According to Whitehead, the process of prehension involves emotion and purpose, valuation and causation, and cannot be equated with mere formal reason. He wants to substitute, in place of the Baconian empiricism, free imagination controlled by requirements of coherence and logic. He says : "The true method of discovery is like the flight of an aeroplane. It starts from

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<sup>1</sup> *The Aims of Education*, p. 14-15.

<sup>2</sup> *Process and Reality*, p. 23.

the ground of particular observation; it makes a flight in the thin air of imaginative generalization, and it again lands for renewed observation rendered acute by rational interpretation.<sup>1</sup><sup>2</sup> The method of imaginative construction helps us in obtaining a synoptic vision of the scientific field. Whitehead has been emphatic in proposing that this method of imaginative construction and rationalization should be also used in the educational processes. Prolonged routine work along set and prescribed lines dulls the imagination. Imagination is essential to illumine the facts. It helps the discovery of general principles which apply to the facts. General principles are not automatic emergents or reflexes of a certain arrangement of facts and events. Their discovery does necessarily involve the flashes and intuitions of the human mind. It is also essential to weigh alternative possibilities in terms of their graded relevance to the concrete occasion as well as in terms of internal logical coherence and consistency. Thus the method of imaginative construction as applied to education seeks to train the pupils in habits of unbiased thought. Boys are to be trained in free thinking. Free thinking necessarily involves the freedom even to think wrongly. Boys should be trained to take delight in the vivid appreciation of the multiple diversity of the world. The universities have to become the centres for training in the habit of imaginative construction. Whitehead refers to certain personal and institutional embodiments of this faculty of imagination as applied to the educational process. Jefferson and William James had this capacity to use imagination in the practice of educational ideals.<sup>2</sup> The commercial civilizations of Greece, Florence and Venice incorporated the ideal of the verification of imagination in social and technical arts. The learning of Holland and the poetry of England also represent this ideal.<sup>3</sup> Whitehead shows great realism in appreciating the sociological forces which alone can make possible the combination of imagination and learning. Leisure is one such extremely essential factor.<sup>4</sup> An educational institution whose members

<sup>1</sup> *Process and Reality*, p. 7.

<sup>2</sup> *The Aims of Education*, p. 105.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 106.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 102.

are perilled by harassing financial worries and are kept under political restraint cannot provide the imaginative stimulus to other minds. The physical situation of the educational establishments—beauty of buildings, situations etc.—is also a necessary stimulus to the unhindered play of imagination. But this element of imagination is not to be allowed to dwindle into empty day dreams and useless fancies. Adequate care has to be taken to see that imagination has been disciplined by detailed facts. In this way imagination can be practised in connecting particular details and their relevance to inclusive generalizations.

(f) *Synthesis of Culture and Specialization.* At the sociological level, the ideal of education is the synthesis of culture and technical specialism. Whitehead has an exalted view of culture. Culture comprehends the creative exercise of the cognitive faculty as well as the capacity to experience the satisfaction derived from art and aesthetics. It (culture) should have a broad humanitarian and ethical orientation and it should train man in the receptiveness to humane ideas.<sup>1</sup> Due to the dominance of the classicist view which gained sway at the time of the Renaissance, it has been fashionable to conceive culture as assimilation and imitation of the best in the days of antiquity. But in the changing dynamics of science and technology, a reproduction of the past is not enough. The fluctuations of the modern world make "ancestral voices prophesying" partly irrelevant. Culture should be an interpretation and critique of the past traditions<sup>2</sup> and heritage but it should also have a fundamental awareness of the novel value-impregnated individuality of emerging entities. Hence what is essential is a synthesis between the critically modified heritage of the past and a vivid prehension of the aesthetic and teleological dimensions of the concrete novel emergents. It is the business of a sound education to combine a vivid realization of values and the logical structure of rational ideas. Culture can never be adequate unless mankind makes a sympathetic historical study of the past as a concrete transition towards a better future. For the realization of a superior future society it is essential to

<sup>1</sup> *The Aims of Education*, p. 13.

<sup>2</sup> "Historical Changes", *Essays in Science and Philosophy*, p. 149.

foster the growth of individuality through cultural pursuits. But it is also very much desirable to cultivate professional specialism in certain fields because the scientific-technological civilization of the modern world is based on the application of professional competence. Culture trains the activistic and aesthetic character of the human mind but professional specialism is concerned with the utilization of the creative achievements of man. According to Whitehead, style and foresight are the contributions of specialism to culture. Style is always the product of specialized study and foresight is a function of specialist competence.<sup>1</sup> Hence the exclusion of specialism in education is tantamount to the destruction of life. Professionalism as the intellectual foundation of civilization is the creation of the nineteenth century and especially of Germany.<sup>2</sup> In the ancient and medieval civilizations there was a partial degree of professionalism but large-scale professional competence in diverse fields is a modern development. German scholars did away with the disorganized and uncoordinated methods of scholarship and contributed to the growth of advanced professional standards. The development of professionalism led to the enhanced stress on the use of abstract knowledge for practical purposes. Certainly, professionalism has accelerated the rate of advance in all the fields of knowledge but it has been associated with one danger. It has led to the growth of particular abstractions and consequently there has been a neglect of the vivid appreciation of the world as a whole. The whole tends to be confused with one of its segmental manifestations. Because of absorption in the details of one special science there is the absence of a coordinated generalized direction of society. Hence Whitehead delivers a warning against the particular groove of abstractions in which specialists tend to revel. His warning, coming from a lifelong specialist in mathematics and philosophy, is well-timed. The problem of modern educationists is to consolidate a program of training which will produce the professional and technical expert and at the same time will conserve the interest of the amateur in various fields

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<sup>1</sup> *The Aims of Education*, pp. 22-25.

<sup>2</sup> *Science and the Modern World*, pp. 98-99.

of concrete facts. At a higher level philosophy is the embodiment of this synthetic vision and ideal. The special sciences and their methods of investigation result in the modification of common sense. It is the business of philosophy to promote the most general systematization of civilized thought. "Philosophy is the welding of imagination and common sense into a restraint upon specialists and also into an enlargement of their imaginations."<sup>1</sup> According to Whitehead, it is essential to have a synthetic approach to education. Even when there is to be concentration upon technical and scientific subjects, it is essential to cultivate some degree of literary grace and aesthetic development. A school and curriculum specializing in literature has to foster the application and utilization of the knowledge attained. A successful synthesis of the three curriculums—literary, scientific and technical—is essential if we want to preserve the balance between culture and professional specialization. "There is not one course of study which merely gives general culture, and another which gives special knowledge. The subjects pursued for the sake of a general education are special subjects specially studied; and, on the other hand, one of the ways of encouraging general mental activity is to foster a special devotion. You may not divide the seamless coat of learning. What education has to impart is an intimate sense for the power of ideas, for the beauty of ideas, and for the structure of ideas, together with a particular body of knowledge which has peculiar reference to the life of the being possessing it."<sup>2</sup>

### **3. The Educational Curriculum**

In suggesting concrete details about the educational curriculum Whitehead takes recourse to the idea behind the Hegelian dialectic of thesis, antithesis and synthesis. He replaces, however, the Hegelian terms by his own triad—the stage of romance, the stage of precision and the stage of generalization.<sup>3</sup> This rhythm or cycle can be illustrated with reference

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<sup>1</sup> *Process and Reality*, p. 26.

<sup>2</sup> *The Aims of Education*, p. 23.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 37.

to the age group of pupils.<sup>1</sup> The first dozen years of a boy's life represent the stage of romance when knowledge emerges before the pupil in the first flush of its novelty. The period of secondary school education from about the age of twelve to the age of seventeen represents the stage of precision. In this stage a more exact formulation of knowledge begins. The final stage of generalization is represented during the years spent at the university. In this period there is a return to the stage of imaginative romance but with the blending of rational concepts. This synthesis is the aim of education and freedom and discipline should also alternate in accordance with this cycle. In the stage of romance freedom should be dominant; in the stage of precision discipline should be stressed, with freedom in subordination; and during the stage of generalization between the years of eighteen to twenty-two there should be the reign of freedom. According to Whitehead the curriculum should be built up in consonance with this cycle.

Whitehead has not given any detailed categorization of the school and the university curriculum. But some of his suggestions are worth consideration. He thinks that from the age of eleven onwards efforts may be concentrated upon a precise knowledge of language. Up to the age of sixteen or seventeen there should be the dominance of general education and after sixteen attempts can be made to obtain adequate competence in a limited field. Before the age of sixteen general education can be imparted in the field of sciences and some descriptive summaries of physiological, botanical, physical, chemical, astronomical and geological facts can be taught to students.<sup>2</sup> Whitehead stresses concreteness of treatment in history teaching. Instead of vague and empty generalizations attempts should be made to use maps, charts, models and pictures. If possible, the habit of museum-going can be cultivated. Boys will be spared the tedium of abstract algebraic graphs if history can be treated graphically. Instead of cramming the details

<sup>1</sup> *The Aims of Education*, p. 42. For an attempt to translate Whitehead's abstract formula into concrete terms see K. G. Collier, *The Social Purposes of Education*, Chapter XIII "The Rhythm of Learning" (pp. 186-93).

<sup>2</sup> *Essays in Science and Philosophy*, p. 144.

of history, an attempt should be made to cultivate the habit of dynamic thinking on the problems of historical evolution. Thus the dramatic element in history can be preserved.<sup>1</sup>

We have earlier referred to Whitehead's plea for a synthesis of culture and professional specialization. The old classical pattern of a liberal culture resulted in an admirable training in the literary products of that past and it has produced some of the finest characters. This classicist theory emphasized a knowledge of art and ethics and literature and its heritage of disinterested intellectual enquiry has been the foundation even of modern science. But in recent times its pretensions have been revealed. Its defect has been that it is an aristocratic ideal and "the action which it contemplates is command."<sup>2</sup> The great error of the old liberal culture has been its total neglect of technical education and manual training. Being rooted in the sociological ideas of the Hellenic peoples, this liberal ideal of culture was postulated upon the existence of a leisure class which disdained manual work. Whitehead states that "the problem of education is to retain the dominant emphasis, whether literary, scientific or technical, and without loss of coordination to infuse into each way of education something of the other two."<sup>3</sup>

The great contribution of science is the evolution of an objective method where one does not have to depend on the accidental emergence of a genius.<sup>4</sup> The scientific method is based upon first-hand accurate observation and experimentation. Its success rests upon the linking of the concrete and the abstract or of the particular and the abstract. Science accepts the validity of correlating events with the antecedent facts.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Essays in Science and Philosophy*, pp. 135-36.

<sup>2</sup> *The Aims of Education*, pp. 55-57.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 64.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. M. Polanyi, *Science, Faith and Society* (Oxford, 1946); Whitehead, *Science and the Modern World*; E. F. Caldin, *The Power and the Limits of Science*. Whitehead, in "Self-Education", *Essays*, p. 123, points out that the more one knows the easier it becomes to add to your knowledge.

<sup>5</sup> According to Whitehead, "Science", *Essays*, p. 143, one of the greatest gifts of science to modern education is the "habit of predetermined perception and the instinctive recognition of its importance."

It repudiates the habit of accepting things on faith. It is essential to appreciate the generality of method fostered by science. In the curriculum prescribed by Whitehead two years will be allotted for physics, two for chemistry, and there will be the study of mathematics concurrently for these four years.<sup>1</sup> The justification for the inclusion of mathematics in a liberal education is that it trains the people in handling general ideas. Whitehead is in favor of including the method of coordinate calculus in relation to rates of increase, in the program of elementary mathematics.<sup>2</sup>

Technical education is very important for the growth of the modern industrial society but it should not be disconnected from the study of science or art. The strength of technical education is its stress on concrete applicability. Since education does not mean only transmission of abstract information, hence a part of technical education should be training in handicrafts. "A training in handicraft of all types should form a large element in every curriculum."<sup>3</sup> The antithesis between a technical and a liberal education is fallacious and Whitehead prescribes the synthesis of the Platonic ideal of liberal culture with the Benedictine emphasis on manual work.<sup>4</sup>

Whitehead has discussed the functions of a university in the modern world. The university is the place where the young and old are jointly collaborating in the advancement of knowledge. The romantic fervour and imagination of the young, if blended with the mature experience of the old, becomes a great creative power. It is essential that the members of the teaching staff should have a passion for creative intellectual endeavours. A university teacher should be actively engaged in the pursuit of knowledge and only such a person can

<sup>1</sup> *Essays in Science and Philosophy*, pp. 144-146.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 139.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 121.

<sup>4</sup> St. Benedict (480-543) appears as a symbol of technical education because according to Whitehead (*Aims*, p. 68), the Benedictines saved the vanishing civilization of the ancient world for mankind by linking together knowledge, labor and moral energy. In 530 A.D. the Benedictine order was founded. It enjoined (a) silence and (b) useful employment when not in divine service.

emit the contagion of creative learning. A faculty of teachers that does not engage in the advancement of knowledge for the enrichment of human civilization will have betrayed the trust reposed in it. The goal of a university, according to Whitehead, is the balance and synthesis between irreducible, stubborn facts and abstract general principles.<sup>1</sup> This balance tends to be jeopardized by the increasing departmentalization which tends to trivialize the mentality of the teaching profession.<sup>2</sup> But the universities cannot remain confined to subserving some pragmatic ends. Their business is to preserve the sense of curiosity and wonder at the revelation of the cosmic drama and perspective. Hence the transmission of received information and knowledge has to be harmonized with the sense of immense suggestiveness with reference to the hitherto unexplored aspects of the universe. The universities are to engage in a ceaseless criticism of those ideals which are to govern the course of civilization. The creative social ideals are to be built in the universities and it is futile to isolate the life in the university from the broad currents of life around. The tendency of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries to keep the universities isolated from practical life is disastrous. Hence it is essential to revive the ideal of the medieval universities,<sup>3</sup> which were, perhaps, in more intimate contact with the life around them. Cooperation between schools, universities and the social and economic institutions of the country is necessary. Thus alone can the universities play a creative role in the history of civilization.

#### **4. Critique and Conclusion**

Whitehead is not a systematic philosopher of education. He has not produced even one single major standard work in educational theory. Hence as a theorist of education he will not rank with Comenius (1592-1670) or Pestalozzi. His contributions in the field of education are confined to a few papers contributed to learned journals and to occasional addresses. Thus it appears that education was not a serious field of major

<sup>1</sup> *Science and the Modern World*, p. 3.

<sup>2</sup> *Nature and Life*, p. 16.

<sup>3</sup> *Essays in Science and Philosophy*, pp. 163-64.

theoretical concentration for Whitehead. But although Whitehead's contributions to the systematic theory of education are not massive, his contributions to education are substantial in two ways. First, he was an eminent mathematician and a world-famous philosopher. His *Process and Reality* contains ripe and mature reflections in the realm of cosmology. Because of his towering eminence in mathematics and metaphysics, his ideas contained in his few papers and addresses on education gain tremendous weight and prestige. I have no intention to underrate Whitehead as an educational philosopher. But I miss in the long list of Whitehead's writings any thorough, systematic and original production in the field of educational theory. His papers do not indicate only wide acquaintance, on his part, with the modern literature in the field of pedagogics, educational psychology and sociology of education. Nevertheless, the papers of Whitehead collected in *The Aims of Education* reveal a fine mind, in touch with the problems of society and politics and aware of the dangers and possibilities of traditional methods in coping with a scientific civilization. It is necessary to supplement the ideas contained in *The Aims of Education* with the broader philosophical speculations of Whitehead. As in the educational philosophies of Plato and Aristotle, it is essential to trace the foundations and presuppositions of their specific educational ideas and notions in their metaphysics, similarly in the case of Whitehead a great contribution can be rendered by reconstructing a philosophy of education on the basis of his *The Aims of Education* and his other books in the field of philosophy and religion. Even as they are, the papers and addresses of Whitehead in the field of education are nevertheless significant because they embody the reactions of one of the greatest minds of the modern world to the problems of education. The second reason for the significance of the educational writings of Whitehead is that they are the productions of a thinker who was a university teacher for about sixty years. In the course of long six decades he was a witness to and a keen participant in modern educational processes. Hence his suggestions proceed not merely from the idealistic constructions of a speculative mind but are the reflections of a person of the most mature experience in that field. It is almost universally acknowledged that

Whitehead was one of the most powerful and stimulating teachers of modern England and the United States. It has even been said that in his philosophy seminars he tried to create something of the intensely vital intellectual atmosphere that characterized the Platonic Academy. Thus the inspiring career of Whitehead as a teacher adds lustre to his views on education.

For the last several years I have had a great fascination for Whitehead. During the days of distressing scepticism I have derived comfort from the contemplation that a man who had the highest distinction in the realms of both mathematics and philosophy has subscribed to the values of the spirit and has pointed out the inadequacies of a scientific materialism. This has been the emotional factor that drew me to a study of Whitehead's philosophy.

Whitehead has something of the poet in him. Like Plato, the great mathematician and philosopher, Whitehead also writes in a poetic style. He is thoroughly erudite but his writings are in a style that is intensely charming. His *The Aims of Education* contains numerous passages which can be worth knowing by heart. I cannot restrain the temptation of quoting two such passages : "Imagination cannot be acquired once and for all, and then kept indefinitely in an ice-box to be produced periodically in stated quantities. The learned and the imaginative life is a way of living, and not an article of commerce."<sup>1</sup> "The teacher has a double function. It is for him to elicit the enthusiasm by resonance from his own personality, and to create the environment of a larger knowledge and a firmer purpose. He is there to avoid the waste, which in the lower stages of existence is nature's way of evolution."<sup>2</sup>

Whitehead's reaction against the tenor of inert ideas, I regard as very significant. In Indian schools and universities we mostly follow the method of the passive transmission of ideas. In Indian universities, sometimes, the ideal teacher is regarded as one who can dictate the maximum number of examination-oriented points in the classes. Boys are busy in passively writing down those points. There is no attempt at

<sup>1</sup> *The Aims of Education*, p. 102.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 51.

the dynamic stimulation of intellectual interest. Instead of encouraging the boys to find out the relevant points for themselves, there is the greatest emphasis on summarizing text-books. This system which apparently looks so innocent is devastating in its consequences. It kills the creative potentialities of both the teacher and the boys. The average teacher, usually does not say anything of his own. His note-books are his never-failing friends. He seldom devotes himself independently to exercise his own mind in the field. The maximum of his competence lies in quoting some Western authorities. The class, truly speaking, is a living laboratory which can be fully utilized in developing our own theories and in making our own contributions. Is it not a betrayal of a sacred trust, that although for the last several decades we have been imparting teaching in the fields of social sciences to the university classes, our own original contributions which can be considered landmarks in those fields are almost non-existent? The fault lies in what Whitehead would call the stupefying effects of inert ideas. Ideas borrowed from others should be used as vehicles for the development and enrichment of our intellectual personality and not for dominating our souls. We have become victims of big books written in a foreign language and we have not subjected ourselves to daring wrestling with the social reality as such. I feel terror-stricken when I contemplate that with a vast army of potentially powerful young minds in our universities, we have not planned anything original and profound except, more or less, dictation of notes. This nightmare of notes is eating into the vitals of our civilization. Today when three big Indian universities have celebrated their centenaries and others their jubilees, it should be an hour of deep heart-searching. What is essential is that some powerful ideas should be selected and the vast army of students should be made to wrestle with them, to understand their implications and to devise ways of using them in life and society. We have to learn to decide among alternative standpoints in social sciences and philosophy. Intellectual confusion protracted for continued periods is an enemy of creative thinking. The deadly virus of inert ideas can be destroyed if we learn to weigh ideas, to arrange and group them, to handle them and thoroughly to assimilate and criticize

them. Instead of ideas being dead mechanical loads on our minds, they have to become creative transforming agencies of our lives and society.

Being myself a university teacher I feel greatly inspired by the ideals which Whitehead has set for universities. It is inspiring to hear from Whitehead : "The universities have trained the intellectual pioneers of our civilization—the priests, the lawyers, the statesmen, the doctors, the men of science, and the men of letters. They have been the home of those ideals which lead men to confront the confusion of their present times."<sup>1</sup> Today in Indian universities there is the rampant dominance of sectional politics, group and caste loyalties and bossism. We have almost forgotten our past heritage and the road to eminence has been identified with stooping before the holders of power. Shall we listen to the serene words of wisdom of Whitehead ? Are we inspired to transform the universities into pilgrimages in the path of creative research ? Will the universities become the centres for handing the torch-light of imaginative wisdom to succeeding generations ? The future will judge us by the advancement to learning that we have made and by the creative and stimulating exercise of our intellects in enlightening the students. If we want to build a solid reputation for India in the republic of letters we have to listen to Whitehead's advice and to make our own contributions to the revelation of the greatness of the universe and its unexplored splendours.

Education, according to Whitehead, should be a process of enjoyment. He does not want to minimize the hard labour the boys will have to undergo in the path of learning but he wants to stress that the labour should yield the sense of joyous growth. He says : "Think of the world on a brilliant spring morning. All the educational reforms of recent years come from realizing the profound truths conveyed in this scene of joyous growth....Neither mind nor body can develop satisfactorily in a strait-waistcoat....The first thing that a teacher has to do when he enters the class-room is to make his class glad to be there." Any attempt at dogmatic imposition or uninspired teaching kills the creative urge. Whitehead's

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<sup>1</sup> *The Aims of Education*, p. 99.

stress on joy, zest and vitality in the process of education is an important contribution to educational thought. The tedium and the monotonous boredom associated with education have somehow to be transcended and attempts have to be made to focus zest and sensitivity upon the teaching process.

Whitehead is right in appreciating the use of hand-craft in the educational process. When he says that the disuse of hand-craft is a contributory cause to the brain-lethargy of aristocracies,<sup>1</sup> I am reminded of the similar sayings of Tolstoy and Gandhi. But while Tolstoy and Gandhi also stressed the moral aspects of manual labour, Whitehead is primarily concerned with the sociological.

Another suggestion of Whitehead worth critical consideration is his opposition to a common external examination system.<sup>2</sup> He emphatically prescribes that actual teachers alone are to be in charge of examinations.<sup>3</sup> Every school should be a unit, with its approved curriculum based on its own needs and formulated by its own teachers. Similar arrangements are to be made in the universities and technical colleges. It is true that in the Graduate schools of the United States the actual teachers are in charge of examinations. But from the travesty that has been made of the assessment system in the schools in Bihar, I am reluctant to prescribe the use of the suggestion of Whitehead in Indian schools.

Whitehead has showed a realistic vision in urging the rapid expansion of educational opportunities, because in a democratic and scientific society, ignorance is the most expensive of all luxuries.<sup>4</sup>

As a philosopher of civilization Whitehead has categorized four inter-connected underlying factors of human life—technology, science, art and religion.<sup>5</sup> He thinks, and rightly so, that the history of mankind has yet to be set in its proper relation to the gathering momentum of technological advance. But technology is only one of the elements in social existence. Whitehead has shown a very comprehensive sociological orien-

<sup>1</sup> *The Aims of Education*, pp. 60-61.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 21.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 16, 21, 25-26.

<sup>4</sup> "Self-Education", *Essays*, p. 126.

<sup>5</sup> *The Aims of Education*, p. 81.

tation in his statement that "no social organization can be understood without reference to these four underlying factors."<sup>1</sup> Thus Whitehead's philosophy of civilization is more comprehensive than the one-sided theory of historical materialism which puts primacy only on the forces of production and the relations of production in the explanation of social dynamics and tends to treat religion as a mere reflex of, or superstructure upon, the underlying social reality. Whitehead's indirect critique of the Marxian sociology is very significant and it can strengthen the tendency towards the theory of pluralistic causation in the social sciences.

There is a certain weakness in Whitehead's philosophy of education. I am greatly perturbed by some elements of unjustified pragmatism in Whitehead. He says : "The insistence in the Platonic culture on disinterested intellectual appreciation is a psychological error. Action and our implication in the transition of events and the inevitable bond of cause to effect are fundamental.....Essentially culture should be for action..."<sup>2</sup> I do not minimize the significance of action and practical activity. They are very important. But the statement that culture should be essentially "for action"<sup>3</sup> does not sound congruous in the mouth of a thinker like Whitehead who has written one whole book, *The Function of Reason*, for the purpose of elucidating the distinction between practical and speculative reason and who has sung the blisses of speculative philosophy almost in superlative terms. When, even in *The Aims of Education* and in his *Science and the Modern World*, he pleads for the synthesis of culture and professional specialism, his denunciation of the Platonic ideal of disinterested intellectual appreciation as a psychological error is an unwarranted concession to pragmatic ideology.

Whitehead has given us an exalted idealism in the field of education. The essential humility of his character revealed in his writings is worthy of his eminence. The depths and the dimensions of the world are vast and any claim to final wisdom is petty and shallow. Knowledge consists in the cultivation of

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<sup>1</sup> *The Aims of Education*, p. 80.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 57.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*

the spirit of ceaseless quest. This attitude alone can give the necessary impetus to man's creative efforts. There is every danger that amidst the cares, worries and distractions of life and in face of the grim and tragic reality of the death of near and dear ones, the zest for life may decline and we may be tempted to compromise with the powers that be. But Whitehead has provided a dignified and exalted conception of life as the foundation for a theory of education. Amidst the alien diversities and multiple contradictions of the world, he exhorts the scholar to struggle with discord in the journey towards harmony. One has to transcend the cramping limitations that befall him and continue the onward journey. This pilgrimage in the path of knowledge has to be undertaken not for the sake of immediate gain and material comforts. The only true comfort for the scholar and the educator is to contemplate that, after all, the transformations in human society have been due not to the Alexanders, Caesars and Charlemagnes but to Platos, Shankaras, Newtons and Einsteins. The urge to add to the storehouse of the wisdom and thus to experience the sense of moral and aesthetic satisfaction can be a great solace to the scholar. In one of his most inspired utterances Whitehead says : "It is the immanence of the Great Fact including this initial Eros and this final Beauty which constitutes the zest of self-forgetful transcendence belonging to civilization at its height. At the heart of the nature of things, there are always the dream of youth and the harvest of tragedy. The adventure of the universe starts with the dream and reaps tragic beauty. This is the secret of the union of zest with peace—that the suffering attains its end in a harmony of harmonies. The immediate experience of this final fact, with its union of youth and tragedy, is the sense of peace. In this way the world receives its persuasion towards such perfections as are possible for its diverse individual occasions." Whitehead has denied the worth of a petty absorption in the struggles of power. He has set before us the vision of a noble ideal. His insistence on zest, imagination and adventure is a great contribution to a philosophy of life, and the technics, curriculum and institutions of education have to be so moulded as to realize the values of this philosophy.

## Bertrand Russell

Bertrand Russell (1872- ) is one of the creative minds of the modern world. His researches and insights have been important in the fields of mathematical logic, epistemology and history of philosophy. In the realms of pedagogics and social and political philosophy he has made significant contributions. He has had also a passion for history. His charming style, lucidity of expression and, above all, his clarity of thought make him the effective spokesman of progressivism in social and political matters. He has been interested in the field of education for over three decades. Not only has he written two important books and several papers and articles in the field of educational theory but he also ran, in cooperation with his wife, a co-educational centre for five years. He has made available the implications of modern psychological theories for the use of teachers and educationists. He is in line with that persistent tradition of Western thought in which philosophers and social thinkers develop their ideas not only at the abstract conceptual level but also try to come down to the concrete details of practical social and educational engineering.

### I. Philosophical Foundations of Education

Education, according to Russell, is not only the process of the transmission of external information but it aims at the broad cultivation of the mind leading to an awareness of man's place and destiny in the society and the universe.<sup>1</sup> He stresses the notion of "reverence for human personality."<sup>2</sup> This implies that man is never a means for serving the ends of some czar or dictator but has an autonomous value of his own. Russell does not believe in the concept of the human soul as a spiritual

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<sup>1</sup> Russell, *Mysticism and Logic*, pp. 36-37.

<sup>2</sup> Russell, *Principles of Social Reconstruction*, p. 102; "Freedom versus Authority", *Sceptical Essays*, p. 201.

substance. Nevertheless, he upholds that the individual has a right to carve his life according to his desires. The ends of life for each individual are those which he strongly desires.<sup>1</sup> There can be no logical argumentation about and no agreed consensus upon the ultimate purpose and final meaning of values; nevertheless individual emotions which are the bases of all judgment of value should be respected.<sup>2</sup> Modern physics has made us aware of the existence of vast forces which govern human life but Russell points out that despite this natural governance men can be free in the realm of thought and aspirations.<sup>3</sup> He sponsors a theory of psychological subjectivism in the realm of values because he thinks that inspite of the limitations upon human freedom in the causal sphere, we need not admit any limitations to our freedom in the field of values because what is regarded as good on its own account may continue to be judged good on the sole basis of our own feelings.<sup>4</sup> Hence in the field of values, for obtaining adequate freedom, it is essential that the feelings and emotions of men should be recognized as powerful forces. This recognition may encourage the modification of our desires and the training of our emotions. Education has a vital part to play in this field. The old ecclesiastical pedagogics accepted the perversity of human feelings and emotions. But modern educational psychology is oriented to the adequate recognition and training of human feelings and emotions.

But the element of emotion is only one of the ingredients of the human psychic structure. There is also the element of cognition. Russell is eulogistic of human knowledge. He asserts that there is an intrinsic sublimity about knowledge in virtue of which we prefer Newton to an oyster. Disinterested curiosity has been responsible for the tremendous achievements of men in different fields. In the Middle Ages,

<sup>1</sup> Russell, *The Scientific Outlook*, p. 274.

<sup>2</sup> Russell, *Education and the Social Order*, p. 221: "All judgments of value are based, in the last analysis, upon emotions." He also points out that man cannot reason logically as to ultimate values. *Ibid.*, p. 218.

<sup>3</sup> Russell, *Mysticism and Logic*, pp. 50-51.

<sup>4</sup> Russell, *An Outline of Philosophy*, p. 312.

the renaissance of learning in the eleventh, twelfth and thirteenth centuries was inspired by the intellectual aspirations of a handful of intellectuals. Albertus Magnus, Aquinas, Dante and Nicholas of Cusa are important names responsible for the growth of medieval scholastic philosophy and learning.<sup>1</sup> They were impelled by a boundless love for learning. Frederick II, the initiator of secular culture, had a tremendous passion for knowledge. It is to disinterested love of learning that the renaissance of Greek studies in the fifteenth century is to be attributed. These historical examples vindicate the autonomous and significant force of spontaneous and disinterested curiosity and learning in the history of civilization.<sup>2</sup> Civilization is a function not of the mechanical operativeness of the forces and factors of production, but is the outgrowth of the combined action of human forethought and knowledge. Hence the immense significance of the cognitive powers of man is apparent. The understanding of the world in rational terms is one of the ultimate goods. The creativism of the cognitive powers of human beings has achieved numerous shining splendors "which the human spirit is bringing down out of the unknown." Philosophy, which is more general and more critical than the specific sciences, imparts an impartial and sober understanding of the world in comprehensive terms and this enormous and vast awareness frees us from the cramping limitations and distortions of petty prejudices and paltry interests.<sup>3</sup> Knowledge gives not only a philosophic delight but it also imparts serenity. Human life is full of sorrow and tragedies, unrealized aspirations and defeated confidence, but amidst all distractions and worries, knowledge initiates us into a larger and less fretful cosmos. It brings within our purview the consoling power of great literature. It provides satisfactions derived from the contemplations of the trials of great men and heroes. It enables the lessening of the crudities and vulgarities of the love of personal power by bringing before man a field wherein he can more fruitfully exercise his abilities and

<sup>1</sup> I have mentioned these four names only to elucidate Russell's views.

<sup>2</sup> *Education and the Social Order*, p. 197.

<sup>3</sup> *An Outline of Philosophy*, pp. 308, 310, 312.

ingenuity. Hence the world of knowledge is immensely significant. The absorption into the province of knowledge generates an attitude of cosmic impersonality. It lifts men out of the quagmire of selfishness and lust and reveals the dignity and indefinable, unlimited sacredness of the human being who represents the growing principle of life and is an embodied fragment of the dumb striving of the world.<sup>1</sup> Knowledge thus does not crush the human spirit but the revelation of the vastness of historical cycles, geological epochs and astronomical abysses is a great panorama which enlarges and energizes the human mind.<sup>2</sup> Education alone can satisfy this irrepressible quest of the human mind and the true worship of the free man is to have the passion for eternal things which brings emancipation.<sup>3</sup> Knowledge thus brings a sense of conquest and mastery even against the invincible odds of fate and omnipotent death. The glory of man is in the contempt for all enslaving forces and in worshipping at the shrine of knowledge.

Education is the process of the perfection of the human being.<sup>4</sup> The psychic constituents of men include not only emotion and the cognitive faculty but also the element of will or power. Left to itself the human will wants to act like a god-like irresponsible agent. It is the aim of education to curb the undesirable elements of individualism and to train the human will in the realization of the sense of citizenship.

A great controversy has been going on as to the main purpose of education. Is education only to provide an ornamental and aristocratic culture based on the study of the classics and the humanities or is it to serve the immediate needs of the society? The believers in the utilitarian approach stress that only those things which serve the immediate needs of society should be included in the curriculum. They are rather sceptical of the use of a curriculum which emphasizes literary studies. Russell is acutely aware that the modern world is a creation of industrial and technological developments. Science is the

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<sup>1</sup> *Principles of Social Reconstruction*, p. 102.

<sup>2</sup> Russell, *Unpopular Essays*, pp. 152-53.

<sup>3</sup> Russell, "A Free Man's Worship" in *Mysticism and Logic*, p. 55.

<sup>4</sup> *Education and the Social Order*, p. 11.

foundation of modern civilization. The world of tomorrow will be built by physiology, psychology and physics. The enormous accumulation of scientific technics oriented to the maximization of goods and comforts is the greatest fact to be reckoned with. Inspite of all our love for Chaucer, Shakespeare and Milton, no body who has tasted the comforts provided by technology, will like to go back to those days when these great figures flourished. But although physical goods and comforts are immensely necessary, it is not possible to maintain that serving the immediate needs of society should be the aim of education. It is true that man has an immense craving and profound wish to prolong his physical existence and even in periods of dire misery and suffering he makes efforts to preserve his life but from this it does not follow that man will be satisfied with mere immediate comforts. All men like to lead a life full of rich emotion. A certain section passionately hankers after the highest intellectual and cultural pursuits. The production of the perfect man which Russell has been contemplating would remain incomplete without that degree of cultural enrichment which was the ideal of Athens and of the eighteenth and nineteenth century aristocratic circles and which is often regarded by its critics as being useless and merely ornamental. The Renaissance proclaimed a revolt against the utilitarian conception of knowledge<sup>1</sup> but the combined claims of technology and industrial science have intensified the arguments of the utilitarians. The demands of national patriotism have been persistent since the middle of the nineteenth century and hence the tendency has grown of canalizing everything into the service of the state and it has become a fashion to decry the claims of the cultural and purely intellectual satisfactions. But it is apparent that howmuchsoever the utilitarian school may emphasize the training of human skill and manipulative arts, it does not provide any clue to the understanding of the problem of the purpose of man. Hence it is essential that attempts should be made to supplement the conception of direct utility as the aim of education with an adequate emphasis on culture. But culture is a comprehensive term and it does not consist merely

<sup>1</sup> Russell, *In Praise of Idleness*, p. 31.

in literary perfection. History is another significant subject which provides culture. Even science, when it is not treated as an ancillary adjunct in the conquest and preservation of political and economic power but is cultivated for the love of knowledges, provides culture. The sphere of values lies outside science only when we concentrate upon the practical, commercial and industrial technological aspects of science. But science as the revealer of the processes of the cosmos and as providing a training in theoretical objectivity and intellectual impartiality and integrity is vitally connected with culture.<sup>1</sup> According to Russell education has to satisfy both the needs of social utility and cultural growth. He firmly says that the good life is one inspired by love and guided by knowledge.<sup>2</sup> A vast part of the meaning of human action is a sealed book for us without love for the participants in action. Hatred is a great bar to knowledge because it curbs and kills the incentive to know. Hence science wielded by love is the only road to progress.<sup>3</sup>

So far, we have discussed the positive factors for the significance of education. Russell substantiates the same view from a different standpoint. He says that the economic depression of the thirties was brought about by the lack of education on the part of bankers and politicians who were not properly trained in the intricacies of international currency and credit.<sup>4</sup> This statement shows that Russell has a genuine and sincere faith in the power of education. In line with this generalization in favor of knowledge is his statement that perhaps the history of the twentieth century would have been different if Edison, Rockefeller and Lenin had more of culture.<sup>5</sup> In making this last statement, it may appear, that like Rousseau, Russell also has become a victim of epigrammatic and paradoxical statements. It has to be recognized, however, that he has been singularly eulogistic in favor of cultural growth and intellectual investigations of the highest order, at a time when the

<sup>1</sup> Russell, "The Place of Science in a Liberal Education", *Mysticism and Logic*, pp. 33-45.

<sup>2</sup> Russell, *On Education*, p. 243.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 185; *An Outline of Philosophy*, p. 243.

<sup>4</sup> *Education and the Social Order*, p. 174.

<sup>5</sup> *The Scientific Outlook*, p. 276.

vociferous shouts of the leaders of a mass democracy tend to jeopardize the claims of philosophic reason. Russell's vision of education as the perfection of the emotions and reason and will of man, should serve as a necessary antidote to the scepticism of modern intellectuals. His enormous insistence on the necessity of education for the creation of the new world may possibly serve to rehabilitate the intellectuals in their position as the guardians of the values of civilization.

The aims of education, according to Russell, can be summed up as follows :

(i) Education should aid in the acquisition of the skills necessary for the provision of the technics, goods and services which can make life comfortable. Science is mainly utilitarian in aim.

(ii) But education has to transcend a merely utilitarian conception. It has also to provide for the wise use of leisure by proper cultural growth. Science can be also an element in culture. Man should attempt to know the highest secrets of the universe.

(iii) Education should aim not only at individual growth but also at the cultivation of the sense of citizenship. In view of the prevalence of international anarchy, this sense of citizenship should not remain confined merely to the bonds of social coherence in the nation-state but has also to teach loyalty to the future world-government.

## **2. Psychological Foundations of Education**

Russell has passionate fondness for the practical use of modern psychological knowledge in the field of education. The old religious teachers and moral preachers relied on constant exhortations to correct the defects in human character. Russell insists that only an education in consonance with the conclusions of modern psychology can eliminate anti-social action. Such an education will produce a generation of children who have been trained in the atmosphere of fearless freedom. Education, wisely given, can produce a population free from disease, malevolence and stupidity. It is possible to have a population enjoying the felicities of universal health, happiness, generosity, intelligence and freedom. A child at

its birth is neither good nor bad. It is not correct to maintain, along with Rousseau, that man is born good and only society and reason deprave him. Nor is the Christian doctrine of original sin capable of obtaining wide adherence. According to Russell, children are born only with reflexes and a few instincts.<sup>1</sup> At another place he substitutes the concept of instincts by unconditioned reflexes.<sup>2</sup> In the explanation of human behavior geneticists and even some psychologists like Goddard and Terman accept the dominant factor of heredity.<sup>3</sup> Political imperialists often use this conception of heredity to support the unsounded creed of racial and especially Nordic superiority. Galton and his followers also upheld that ability is inherited but Russell does not accept their views,<sup>4</sup> nor are they scientifically reliable. It is not yet possible to apportion the respective shares of heredity and environment in the formation and moulding of the character of the human being. There is no finality about the intelligence tests. The only safe conclusion is that some part of the difference of intelligence between one adult and another is congenital.<sup>5</sup> These views of Russell appear balanced and we can agree with them.

Human desires are the product of three factors : (i) native dispositions, (ii) present circumstances, and (iii) education.<sup>6</sup> It is possible by means of education to change the desires of men so that they may, in future, begin to act spontaneously for the realization of social good. Along with fashion and opportunity education is a factor which can modify human desires.<sup>7</sup> Perhaps these two factors, fashion and opportunity, would be comprehended under what Russell had earlier called present circumstances. Russell stresses, along with Hobhouse, the Hellenic concept of harmony.<sup>8</sup> He says that the supreme

<sup>1</sup> *On Education*, p. 33. Modern psychologists will take exception to the use of the antiquated concept of instincts.

<sup>2</sup> *Education and the Social Order*, p. 50.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 45.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 54.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 50.

<sup>6</sup> *An Outline of Philosophy*, p. 241.

<sup>7</sup> Russell, *Human Society in Ethics and Politics*, p. 149.

<sup>8</sup> L. T. Hobhouse, *The Rational Good*.

ethic is the production of harmonious desires which neutralize discords. The realization of such psychological harmony can be produced by social institutions and education. Although Russell repudiates the optimistic belief of Watson in the omnipotence of education to make of every one a Mozart or a Newton,<sup>1</sup> still he accepts the theory of the change of human nature. He, however, is very careful in explaining what he means by a change of human nature.<sup>2</sup> He does not think that the original instinct and reflexes with which a child is born can be changed. Nor does he think it possible to change the human character after the age of six. But he does think that if the training of character till the age of six has been properly attended to, then it is possible to have an adult population whose behavior will be radically different from that of the present.

One of the most significant developments in modern psychology is the school of psycho-analysis. Russell has been inspired by the method of this school. He emphatically asserts that the general method of psycho-analysis is essential for the creation of right methods of moral training. Psycho-analysts are fundamentally correct in the stress they have put on early childhood as the key period in a man's character-formation. In former times education began at the age of eight with instruction in Latin. Now, under the influence of psycho-analysis it begins at birth. The Freudians have made the immensely significant discovery that the repression by will or by an external authority does not eradicate an undesirable impulse. The impulses are merely driven underground. The mechanics of their operation thereby simply become different but often more difficult to control. Hence the essence of moral training should be, not repression, but a sympathetic understanding of the dynamics of psychological motivation and the formation of good habits. But Russell is also critical of some of the conclusions of psycho-analysis.<sup>3</sup> He definitely and emphatically asserts that the parental instinct is different from the sex-instinct. He says that the view of some Freudians that parents ought not to kiss or

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<sup>1</sup> *Education and the Social Order*, p. 47.

<sup>2</sup> *On Education*, pp. 244-45.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 156, 152, 98.

fondle children is absurd because children cultivate a carefree outlook on life and do not develop anxieties if they receive the warmth and intensity of affection from parents. Excess of the demonstration of affection, however, is condemned. Russell repudiates the favorite concept of Oedipus Complex but says that children should not be made to develop sentiments of extreme devotion to one or other parent because it leads to mental slavery of the child. He also repudiates the view which finds sexual symbolism in children's play.<sup>1</sup> Instead, he finds in plays the expression of the very natural will to power. In spite of making these fundamental reservations, Russell has been greatly influenced by the psycho-analytic techniques for influencing human character.<sup>2</sup> What is needed in a child is to produce a synthesis of freedom and happiness. The child wants to experience a sense of both safety and freedom. The methods of behaviorist psychology are inadequate for the character-training of children.<sup>3</sup> Perhaps Russell will say that they are too mechanical. Psycho-analysis is a better guide in this field and it has revolutionized modern educational thought and practice by stressing that the education of the child should begin at birth.

The education of the child can be divided into two parts : education of character which should begin at birth and should be nearly complete at the age of six.<sup>4</sup> The second part of education is training in knowledge or intellectual education. Russell categorizes four universally desirable bases of an ideal character—vitality, courage, sensitiveness and intelligence. The first is vitality. It imparts physical vigor and the capacity of hard work. It makes life a matter of interest and joy. It curbs the sense of envy because it provides a buoyant enthusiasm in one's own existence. Courage is the second element. In Plato's *Republic* also courage is regarded as an important virtue. To have courage one must have self-respect and a sense of personal dignity. This will make him behave with confidence without any servility. It is also necessary to cultivate

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<sup>1</sup> *On Education*, p. 98.

<sup>2</sup> *The Scientific Outlook*, pp. 186, 188.

<sup>3</sup> *Education and the Social Order*, pp. 60, 62, 64.

<sup>4</sup> *On Education*, pp. 36-37.

an impersonal outlook because too great an engrossment with our limited physical self makes the prospect of death terrible. Knowledge and art provide a wide outlook and make available a multiplicity of vivid but physically intangible interests. This width and impersonality remove the all too common fear of death. Sensitiveness is necessary in order to remove the degeneration of courage into coarse brutality. Sensitiveness makes us sympathetic and considerate for the feelings of others. Intelligence or cognitive sensitiveness is another desirable element. It comprehends both the receptive capacity for knowledge as well as the content of knowledge.<sup>1</sup> Curiosity develops very early in the child and it is necessary that it should continue in full force because it is the incentive to further knowledge.

The technics of obtaining knowledge are called by Russell "intellectual virtues", a term which he borrows from Aristotle. These intellectual virtues include curiosity and open-mindedness, which act as antidotes to dogmatism and orthodoxy which stifle the quest for knowledge. It is also essential to have<sup>1</sup> the belief that knowledge is possible although difficult. Without patience and industry no difficult intellectual victory can be achieved and hence they also are included in intellectual virtues. Exactness or the sense of accuracy is also desirable. Russell lists up four forms of accuracy—muscular, factual, aesthetic and logical. The sixth intellectual virtue is concentration. It has to be intense, prolonged and voluntary. Attempts have to be made to train the child from the very beginning in the four ideal bases of human character—vitality, courage, sensitiveness and intelligence. Training in character involves the repudiation of the old theory of moral evil which is a legacy of Christianity and which influenced the practice of the public schools in England. Dr. Arnold was an extreme advocate of this theory.<sup>2</sup> He believed that boys had a great amount of moral evil in them and he had faith in the exercise

<sup>1</sup> According to Russell, *On Education*, pp. 59, 63, 64, intelligence is inclusive of open-mindedness, truthfulness, the desire to please and cooperate and the courage to proclaim unpopular opinions.

<sup>2</sup> *Sceptical Essays*, p. 187.

of power to curb that. That conception, fortunately, is a thing of the past. It is not possible to control bad desires by the mere exercise of will power or external technics of repression and coercion. The problems of boys have to be sympathetically handled and attempts should be made to uproot bad desires by means of training in good habits.<sup>1</sup>

Training in character should begin even in the first year of the child. A policy of delicate balance between neglect and indulgence should be followed with regard to the infant. The child should not be given a sense of enormous self-importance because in later life the shocks of the world will produce a sense of utter frustration to a pampered soul. The child learns much more in the first twelve months of its existence than it ever will in any corresponding future time. Hence the first year is not to be neglected. It is wise to treat the infant with respect as a future citizen. "Do not sacrifice his future to your present convenience, or to your pleasure in making much of him."<sup>2</sup> Fears do not exist during the first year. Gradually they develop. Russell accepts that some fears are instinctive and some are acquired. It is essential that the person in charge of a child should not feel fear and even if he feels it he must not show it in presence of the child. Russell is very emphatic on the point that fearlessness should be cultivated in early childhood and he would go to the length of sanctioning some amount of force for making the child immune against fear. This would mean, for example, that if the child has an irrational dread of cotton pieces, it may be forced to touch them repeatedly. In school the child may learn fearlessness from other children. By teaching skill in manipulating or controlling matter, some amount of training in physical courage can be imparted. According to Russell the fear of the mysterious is instinctive but by adequate training this can be transformed into scientific interest. Sometimes children have a tendency to experience unnecessary anxiety. This is a consequence of repression by elders and is less common now than it once used to be. Children should also be encouraged to take part in play. Games have a great importance in developing physical

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<sup>1</sup> *On Education*, pp. 34-35.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 79.

health although their basis in too much of competitiveness is to be condemned. Russell also stresses the cultivation of the instinct of constructiveness in children. This would result in the elimination of thoughtless cruelty. Russell refers not to material construction only. He wants that cooperative non-material constructiveness also, as fostered, for example, by acting and choral singing should be encouraged. It is possible, furthermore, to stress constructiveness in intellectual studies. Science which often puts the prospect of constructing and doing something positive is a great help in this direction. In the later stages of education encouragement should be provided to social constructiveness and students should be made to think about using existing social forces for building a better world. Society is to be regarded neither as a dead machine nor as a tree.<sup>1</sup> By fostering the sense of psychological constructiveness, education on right lines is possible. Higher education would thereby become supple and scientific. Education has also to foster in the young the sense of justice. Russell does not believe that the sense of justice is innate. It can be quickly created, however. No child should be given less than justice and no one more than what is just. The sense of property is very strong in children. Whatever they grasp they feel to be their own. Care has to be taken to see that the younger children are not deprived of the use of the toys of the older. In a family of many children some toys can be common. It is important to see that the child does not develop a sense of thwarting from not having enough property. Another consideration is to allow the child private property when it fosters desirable activities. But the final end should be to develop such character which finds delight not in possessive but creative activities which permit a great deal of common sharing.

Truthfulness has also to be produced among the children as a part of their moral education. Not only truthfulness in speech but truthfulness in thought also, is important. According to Russell, it does not first occur to the young that they can indulge in false statements. Due to the practice of adults, children learn lying. But when a child is discovered to lie, the

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<sup>1</sup> *On Education*, pp. 114-16.

parent should gently and reasonably point out to him that he should not lie. Repression and punishment, here as elsewhere, are never the sovereign remedy. If children are to grow to be truthful it is essential that adults should never take recourse to lying in their dealings with the young. Russell is very emphatic in his statement that truth must be spoken to the child in all dealings with him. It is no use telling lies to children on the supposition that they do not understand. The child can grow into a honest citizen if there is an atmosphere of reciprocal confidence between children and adults. Punishment has a certain very minor place in education. Russell is categorical in his opposition to physical punishment. If slight, its harm may be small but it seldom brings any good. If extreme, physical punishment may produce brutality. Hence the natural spontaneous expression of indignation should suffice as punishment. Children should be encouraged to develop a respect for life. It is a happy sign that under the influence of modern psychological teachings the role of the rod is declining and a more enlightened conception of the relation between parents and children based on love is developing. It is very essential that there should be more than one child in the family. An isolated only child becomes either a pathetic figure or a nuisance. In the company of other children it is possible to learn the virtue of cooperation. Only in dealing with equals can one learn self-respect without tyranny and consideration without slavishness. Hence parents cannot provide the atmosphere that is created by the company of other children. Without such a company a child develops abnormal complexes. John Stuart Mill is a classic example. He had a pathetic subconscious antipathy to any argument adduced against his father. In his autobiography he relates that for some time he contemplated suicide because he was worried over the exhaustion of all combinations of musical notes in the world. Such morbid feelings are the natural products of isolated childhood. Only in genial social company does one develop an attitude of elasticity and resilience and get over angularities. A child is entitled to genuine and intense parental affection without unnecessary caressing. A wise parent would shower affection on the child and would be content if it grows in physical and

mental stature. Sympathy, indeed, is partly instinctive but it can be adequately trained to comprehend sympathy for people who are removed in time and place. Affection cannot be created but the springs of affection can be liberated. Happiness and courage release the springs of affection because they are antidotes to envy and fear. Russell recommends that it will be best to supplement the training in character received at home by sending the children to suitable nursery schools from the age of two onwards, at least for some part of the day. The nursery school should be the intermediate stage between the early training of character at home and the later intellectual education in the school. Russell is attracted by the sociological prospects of the nursery schools as agents in neutralizing the differences between classes. He views them as great sources of mental and physical development.

So far, Russell's ideas on the training of character have been presented. If conducted on right lines, this training should be complete by the age of six. It implies that the boy or girl who has been imparted the correct early training should have habits and desires which will lead in the right direction, if a certain care is taken with the environment. If this training has been properly given, then the school teachers can concentrate upon teaching in an intellectual direction and this will produce the further development of character that may be desired. I do not agree with Russell on this point but I will discuss it later on.

### **3. The School and the University**

The rise of modern mass democracy transformed teaching from being a profession concerned only with the higher structure of society into a considerably expansive branch of public service and hence the importance of schools has increased. In the family the child gets affection and self-importance. The home has an integral place in the development of the character of the child. But it cannot take the place of the school. As children grow older the argument that they should be sent to boarding schools becomes significant. The school and its curriculum have a very significant place in the education of the boy. Russell assumes that by the age of five the boy has learnt how

to read and write. At five history can be taught to boys in the form of interesting stories. With the help of cinema, if possible, world-history can be begun at the age of six, of course in a vastly simplified, generalized and outline form. Students should be taught to recognize the greatness of moral and intellectual heroes like Buddha, Socrates, Archimedes, Galileo and Newton. The eulogy of war-leaders should be avoided. In learning literature, Russell stresses learning by heart<sup>1</sup> because the good effect of literature cannot otherwise be obtained. At the age of twelve mathematics and science should be taught, first geometry and then algebra. By the age of fourteen it should be possible to discover who amongst the students have a genuine taste for mathematics and science. Similarly between the ages of twelve and fourteen just so much of instruction in Latin should be given as will suffice to indicate which of the students have a taste and facility for it. At the age of fourteen, specialization can be begun. Only pupils of more than average intelligence should specialize after fourteen; the pupils of less than average intelligence should not specialize at all in the school, unless it is in the way of vocational training. Russell makes three broad divisions for specialization in school : (1) Classics, (2) Mathematics and Science, (3) Modern humanities, which include modern language, history and literature. In each division it might be possible to specialize somewhat more before leaving school. At the age of sixteen a student may be allowed to specialize either in science or in mathematics. Similar remarks apply to modern humanities. Every body should be taught anatomy, physiology and hygiene in view of their great utilitarian importance.

From the standpoint of the method of imparting education, it is essential to stress that there should be an attitude of love on the part of the teacher for the pupils. The teacher should be a safeguard against dogmatism. He should not transmit definite opinions on controversial questions. It should be his business to awake and maintain the intellectual alertness of students. The newer school of thought in education has stressed that learning can be made interesting and the teacher can

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<sup>1</sup> *On Education*, p. 210; *Education and the Social Order*, pp. 164-65.

open delightful and useful vistas before the pupils. He can cure the disease of fanaticism by tolerance. He has to encourage the students to listen to the two sides of a controversy and then to frame their judgment. It is essential that teachers should love teaching. This is only possible if they are not spiritually exhausted by overwork. They should maintain their independence of thought and this can be a counterpoise against the rise of totalitarianism.<sup>1</sup> More important than the transmission of information is the way in which teaching is imparted. Due to the rampant cult of competition in the schools, boys are made to undergo serious physical, intellectual and emotional strain to fare better in the examinations. This overstrain has to be avoided. There should be a serious curtailment of instruction that does not serve any useful purpose. Above all, it is essential to develop the scientific spirit which believes in the accuracy and exactness of the method rather than in the formulation of the right answers. No attempt should be made to hoodwink the boys by giving them definite answers on problems on which a wise agnosticism is the only correct approach.

Russell has not discussed the problem of university education in details because at this stage competence in specialized fields is the essential requirement and the art of pedagogy is not very important. In the Middle Ages, the universities mainly trained the clergy for ecclesiastical profession. The Renaissance initiated the practice of the education of a gentleman at the universities and this continued in the seventeenth, eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. In modern times the universities have become the centres for professional training. A university, however, cannot confine itself to the limited and utilitarian function of serving as the preparatory ground for those who want to get further training in professions. It has to conserve and extend the tradition of pure research. At one place Russell opines that those who have to receive a university education should be selected at the age of twelve and they should not be subjected to any more competitive tests.<sup>2</sup> This selection should

<sup>1</sup> Russell, "Functions of a Teacher", *Unpopular Essays*, pp. 146-60.

<sup>2</sup> *Education and the Social Order*, p. 170.

be made on the basis of intelligence and not of actual proficiency. Russell is not unaware of the great contributions and prestige of the older universities of Europe but he has not failed to draw attention to some of their serious limitations. As a social thinker he is repelled by the situation wherein men in the universities are unmindful of the problems of ordinary citizens. This serves to create an unrealistic outlook and atmosphere in the universities. Furthermore, research in the universities is patterned on some stereotyped and conventional lines and it is not possible for a person who contemplates an original line of research to receive adequate encouragement. Russell also is perturbed by the fact that due to lack of proper contact between the different centres of higher learning, sometimes, teachers and professors betray a lamentable ignorance of researches going on at other places. He notes with satisfaction, however, the fact that the old tradition that the university is a place where sons of rich men loaf for three to four years is dying. He prescribes that the habit of wide and intelligent reading should be developed in students. There is the necessity of more personal contact between the teachers and the taught. His supreme insistence is on the acquisition of new knowledge for the better understanding of the world and not for any immediate utilitarian purpose. It is only by fostering research that the universities can play a vital part in the advancement of the human community.

#### 4. Sociological Foundations of Education

Russell has devoted considerable attention to the discussion of the sociological foundations and implications of education. He starts with a problem which is at least as old as Aristotle's *Politics*. In the third book of the *Politics* Aristotle raises the fundamental question as to whether the virtues of the good man and the good citizen are the same. His answer is that the virtues of the good man are absolute, while the virtues of the good citizen are determined in accordance with the fundamental principles of the polity wherein he resides. Only in the perfect state will the virtues of the good man and the good citizen be identical. Although Aristotle has thus raised this question, it appears from the VII and VIII books of the *Politics* that he

is mainly concerned with the education of the good citizen in a polity which is more or less the mean between an oligarchy and a democracy. Russell also starts with an Aristotelian framework and discusses the question as to whether education should aim at producing the highest cultivation and excellence of the individual or whether it should aim at producing loyal citizens "for the use of the state". The answer that he gives is oriented more in the direction of Christian and democratic individualism than towards the Aristotelian cult of the supremacy of the city-state. Russell is a rebel. He finds enormous pleasure in revolting against the established traditions and institutions. He is also a political rebel and found himself in prison during the first World War because he was a pacifist. Even in one of his latest books, *Authority and Individual*, he has preached that on certain occasions the individual may feel justified in organizing revolution against the state.<sup>1</sup> Russell is one of the few prophets in modern times who have the courage to challenge the pretensions of the organized state, in the name of individual dignity. He is emphatic in pointing out the inadequacies of citizenship as the ideal for education. The apotheosis of the virtues of citizenship is tantamount to the neutralization of creativeness which flourishes on the efflorescence of the individual's personality. Militant national patriotism has a blighting influence on educational life. Sometimes, under the dominance of oligarchs and plutocrats, education becomes conservative and even reactionary and retards all progressive movements. At other times, in the real or assumed interest of the government, elaborate methods of censorship and control are exercised over educational institutions. Hence the Greek ideal of education for citizenship is inadequate, according to Russell. He is candid enough to acknowledge the great contributions made by the Greeks to higher mathematics, especially geometry, and to the field of deductive reasoning but he does not fail to notice the devastating and suicidal wars brought about by the passionate attachment of the Greeks to the city-state. He, however, does not preach the nullification of the sense of citizenship. The

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<sup>1</sup> *Authority and Individual*, p. 110; Russell also accepts the possibility of rebellion in *Education and the Social Order*, p. 14.

modern state is an instrument for preserving social coherence against anarchical and disruptionist tendencies and education does have to inculcate loyalty to the state. But the better thing will be to foster loyalty to the formation of a world government. Russell, as we have seen, is immensely devoted to the ideal of disinterested spontaneous quest of the highest knowledge about the universe. He has the greatest admiration for the achievements of great artists, painters, poets, scientists and philosophers. Their achievements indicate the creative exuberance of the individual genius. This unhindered individual creativism has captured the imagination of Russell and he exults in singing its greatness. As a theorist, prescribing the purpose of education, he pleads for a synthesis between the ideals of education for the citizen and education for individual culture. This ideal of synthesis appeals to me. Russell rightly points out the defects of the educational practices of modern Japan, of the Jesuits and of the English and American public schools because they have lauded the ideal of citizenship and have ended in exalting patriotic fervor. In an imperfect world, the more we can synthesize, the nearer to truth do we approximate and hence Russell rightly pleads for the synthesis of the two ideals.

Russell has taken into consideration the ways of reconciling individuality and citizenship. He pleads for a world government and the elimination of large-scale wars. The negation of patriotism will mean the end of the ideal of the citizen being a prospective cannon-folder against the enemy. It is also necessary to eliminate the diverse types of superstitions which perpetuate the reign of group dominance. Superstitions are encouraged by the ruling classes because they lead to the atrophy of the reason of the citizens and thus it becomes easy to establish a regime of injustice. The absence of the coerciveness and compulsiveness of national patriotism and of the irrationalities of superstitions will open the way for the operation of the human reason. It is also essential to curb the dangers of unnecessary uniformity. It may be possible to avoid the pressure of the herd in school by placing the clever children in separate schools.<sup>1</sup> Russell is very emphatic on this point. He

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<sup>1</sup> *Education and the Social Order*, p. 238.

would also plead against the degeneration of the pedagogue into an executive or an administrator. The teacher should win the confidence of the pupils by love and should not aim at imposing a routine uniformity. If he loves his pupils he will be interested in their peculiarities and will aim at their development. But if he behaves like an executive, then he would prefer to impose his sway *en masse* on the pupils. The wise educational policy for the present is to reconcile individuality and citizenship.

There has been current for some time among progressive educational theorists what has been called the "negative" theory of education.<sup>1</sup> It is associated, at least partly, with the name of Rousseau and is the pedagogical analogue to the theory of political liberalism. It is a philosophy of educational *laissez faire*. It propounds that the sole purpose of education is to provide opportunities of growth and to remove hampering influences. Russell is inspired by this theory because it stresses spontaneity and freedom. Repression of desires in childhood leads to the formation of psychological complexes and other perversities. If the father is the agent of repression, then, in later life, the hatred of the child may express itself vicariously as hatred against the state or the Church. Furthermore, repression is repugnant to the growth of original creative powers, and hence, is undesirable. But children cannot be allowed to enjoy the reign of unmitigated freedom since the power of rational self-determination and consistent self-direction is very ill-developed or almost unknown in young children. Hence some degree of force has to be used to make the boys observe the rules of cleanliness and hygiene, and for teaching them honesty or respect for the property of others. A subtle blending of discipline and freedom is, therefore, the wise policy.<sup>2</sup> Some limitation, necessarily, has to be imposed on the freedom of the child. Freedom to learn or not to learn can be only partially granted to children. All who are not abnormally deficient have to be made to learn at least the basic elements of education. To this extent coercion is justified. More freedom,

<sup>1</sup> *Education and the Social Order*, pp. 32-34.  
<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 40.

however, can be given in the choice of the subjects of study than exists at present. Russell would plead for an increasing degree of freedom of opinion to the teachers and the pupils. Some advocates of dogmatism plead against the extension of freedom on the ground that it can jeopardize national security but as a student of history Russell would retort that in every important battle since 1700 A.D. the more democratic side has been invariably victorious.<sup>1</sup> If dogmatism becomes ascendant and enjoys almost monopolistic power then civilization degenerates and decadence sets in. If rival dogmatic faiths encounter each other, there is the danger of a mutual holocaust. Hence it is essential to develop tolerance based upon freedom, if progress in civilization is to be achieved and maintained.

Russell is fundamentally hostile to aristocracy. He takes Locke and Rousseau to task because they consider the education only of an aristocratic boy, which involves the expenditure of one man's (the teacher's) whole time. He is a critic of the British public schools because they had a very strong oligarchical and aristocratic bias. Apart from the fact that these public schools taught a contempt for intelligence and inculcated a conventional moral code, Russell is critical of them because they acted as the production-factories for agents and managers of colonial imperialism. The educational system of any class-stratified society is subjected to serious drawbacks. It produces inflated pride in the rich and obsequious servility in the poor. It, at least to some extent, tends to attach more social prestige to the mind than to that of the body because manual labor is anathema to an aristocrat. Even in the universities the evil effects of the class-bound society are apparent. From the ethical standpoint the greatest drawback of such a society is that the holders of power develop an ideology which attempts a conservative defence of the *status quo* and limits the scope of justice and sympathy. Aristocracy is an anachronistic institution, and Russell's hostility to it, is great. He is very cautious, however, to stress that the quest of pure learning which is the legacy of the aristocratic ideal should not be allowed to suffer in these days of universalization of education. Nevertheless,

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<sup>1</sup> *Unpopular Essays*, p. 151.

although an opponent of aristocracy, Russell is in no case a defender of the system that operates in democratic countries. Democracy is bad when in the name of the average and the herd, it tends to persecute the exceptional individuals. In the opinion of Russell, the difficulty in the United States in devising schemes of education which would give corresponding advantages to clever children, is an instance of great waste entailed by the exaggeration of the democratic spirit.

Russell's enmity to religious and ecclesiastical interferences in education is most pronounced. He would endorse Voltaire's statement that the church is an infamous thing. He blatantly asserts that the church is opposed to the extension of literacy because it flourishes upon ignorance.<sup>1</sup> There are certain fundamental defects of all kinds of religious education.<sup>2</sup> First, religious teachers and leaders are opposed to all areas of knowledge which conflict with the dogmas of the scriptures. Thus certain areas of fruitful and valid scientific knowledge become suspect. The religious opposition to the doctrine of evolution is only one instance. The second danger is that in those places where the governing authority compels religious conformity, it tends to instil hypocrisy in the teachers who want to retain their jobs. The third and the basic flaw in religious education is that certain fundamental propositions of the scriptures are regarded as beyond the province of logical scrutiny. Science, on the other hand, does not believe in preventing the rational faculty from examining any proposition. It does not accept the view that some propositions are transcendent for the use of the logical reason. On the basis of these three arguments Russell holds that any creed is likely to be harmful in education when it is regarded as beyond the bounds of intellectual scrutiny. He seems to have struck a hornet's nest when he delivers his attacks against the religious teaching in Christian countries. He regards religion as a conservative force which often sanctions the continuance of crude and barbaric practices. He adheres to the theory, partly sanctioned by Hobbes and the Marxists, that the craving for religious faith is an outcome of fear and he is

<sup>1</sup> *Sceptical Essays*, pp. 186-87.

<sup>2</sup> *Education and the Social Order*, pp. 108-9.

not prepared to sacrifice human dignity in bowing before superstitious entities. Like a typical citizen of the materialistic West, Russell refuses to be hypnotized by the charms of the beyond. He would refuse being disillusioned of the importance and values of this earth and its possessions. If perchance, he could have heard of the Sanskarite doctrine of Maya he would have scornfully brushed it aside. He holds that faith in religious entities and the practice of confession tend to sap self-reliance and hence they are immoral. As a philosopher, Russell is perturbed by the tendency of the Church to belittle intellectual virtues. He says : "So far as I can remember there is not one word in the gospels in praise of intelligence."<sup>1</sup> It would have been an interesting sight to watch a discussion between the mystic Kabir and Russell on the role of reason in human life. After having pointed out these weapons in Russell's armoury, it is almost tautological to assert that he does not believe in the Christian ethics of sins and virtues.

Russell is deadly opposed to the control of education by the state. When the state becomes the supreme educator, there is the danger that it may result in the mental atrophy of the citizens because criticism of the rulers is not permitted. Thus political rulership assumes a sacrosanct character. Under the influence of the view that illiteracy is a disgrace to civilization the cult of universal compulsory instruction has become fashionable but the motives behind this movement are not all intellectual. Universal compulsory instruction became possible in the Western countries because, due to the expansion of wealth by the industrial revolution, it was possible to incur the necessary expenditure on it. This movement was partly inspired by motives of commercialism because with a literate population, the increase of total production was possible. However, the good effects of this movement cannot be minimized. Disraeli had said : "We must educate our masters," and it is true that democracy would be an impossibility without mass education. Russell is opposed to state education because one of the purposes of the state, in education, is to produce citizens "who will be convenient" for the state. The state is justified in demanding

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<sup>1</sup> *Education and the Social Order*, p. 115.

loyalty only to the extent that it fosters social coherence and prevents anarchy but the pacifist Russell is shocked at the perpetuation of international tension and anarchy. In Soviet Russia, Nazi Germany, Italy and Japan, militant nationalism invaded education and the cult of aggressive war and obscurantist fanaticism was preached. Thus the old concept of universality which was proclaimed by the *Pax Romana* and by the Roman Catholic Church has been rudely shattered in several countries. The virulence of national patriotism constitutes the most dangerous menace to world peace and civilization. The stress on militarism involves the inculcation of hatred and almost like a Buddhist, Russell refuses to accept hatred as a decent canon of civilized conduct. To the scientific mind of Russell, the teaching of nationalism is bad because it is based on a deliberate falsification of history. He is so much horrified at the intensifying rapacity of nationalism, for being the production-centres of which he blames modern schools, that he considers the war-monger leaders of today as lacking in diffused parental feeling. Hence the establishment of an international authority is the most urgent and imperative reform from an educational, as well as from every other point of view.

Russell adopts a critical and impartial attitude to the system of education in Soviet Russia. Schools in Russia are not oriented to pure intellectual academicism. Knowledge is not the basic goal in the Soviet system but the incidental product of a definite organization of life according to the communist sociology. In Russia the schools are not separated from life. The anti-social concept of competition which has been intensified by capitalism has been eliminated from Russian schools and boys are trained to act as integral units within a fraternal social commonwealth. This attitude neutralizes frustration, which often is the result of individual failure in the race of cut-throat competition, and imparts hope and faith to the students. But the greatest weakness of the Russian system is the dominance of the dogma of Marxism as the culminating goal of all intellectual enquiries. In such an atmosphere, freedom of research becomes impeded and the inevitable consequence is bound to be mental stagnation.

Russell undertakes a sociological investigation of the influences of economic factors on education.<sup>1</sup> The amount of funds that a particular country can make available for educational purposes depends upon its economic resources. Moreover, it is seen that at times a conservative note is introduced in education because for obtaining endowments and donations from plutocrats, educational authorities have to consent to act according to their wishes. The educational system is often considerably influenced by the traditions, *mores* and patterns of action and thought of a conservative class-stratified society. Russell is critical of the snobbery operating in English educational systems. In view of the enormous power of economic instrumentalities on education, Russell, almost like a disciple of Marx, arrives at the conclusion : "It is not to be expected, therefore, that the present defects in the educational system can be remedied until the economic system has been transformed."<sup>2</sup> He thinks that if the system of private capitalism were abolished, it will also result in a considerable diminution of the evils of nationalism in education because to a great extent the evils of nationalism are connected with private property.<sup>3</sup>

Russell is not unaware of the growing art of propaganda and its baneful influence on education.<sup>4</sup> It is true that in all education, propaganda has some part because the teacher does inculcate his preferences and opinions. But ever since the Reformation the part played by propaganda in education is on the increase and the Jesuits had a great part in the extension of the role of propaganda. The only way to counteract the evils of propaganda is to have rival propagandists<sup>5</sup> in every school and broadcasting can serve this purpose because boys can listen to rival points of view and can be trained in forming their own political judgments.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Education and the Social Order*, pp. 199-201, 209.

<sup>2</sup> Russell, "The Case for Socialism", *In Praise of Idleness*, pp. 138-39.

<sup>3</sup> *Education and the Social Order*, p. 206.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 213-15.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 225.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 228.

### 5. Critique and Conclusion

Russell's writings on social philosophy and education are not marked by any profound erudition. The almost encyclopaedic mastery of the details of social sciences and history, that we find in Herbert Spencer, Max Weber, L. T. Hobhouse and Vilfredo Pareto, is not to be found in Russell. He has written an enormous number of volumes and hundreds of articles but his writings fail to bear that impress of prolonged, intense and concentrated studies in the history of human thought and social sciences that we find in the intellectual productions of these four great sociologists—Spencer, Weber, Hobhouse and Pareto. Even in Russell's *History of Western Philosophy* I miss the scholarship and erudition of Ueberweg and the depth of Windelband. Perhaps in defence of Russell, it will be stated that the world-wide eminence of Russell rests on his *Principia Mathematica* (a joint work in three volumes with A. N. Whitehead), *Principles of Mathematics*, *The Analysis of Matter*, *The Analysis of Mind*, *Human Knowledge*, *An Outline of Philosophy* etc. and not on his productions in the field of social thought. It may also be said that Russell's writing in the field of education, sociology and political philosophy represent only the secondary products of his genius. They are, as it were, not meant to be contributions to the world of scholarship but are the popular admonitions of an eminent philosopher. But even this type of generalization about the achievements of Russell is not ultimately fair to him. Aristotle, Spinoza and Hegel were also top-most metaphysicians. Nevertheless their works in political philosophy like the *Politics* (Aristotle), *Tractatus Politicus* (Spinoza), and *Philosophy of Right* (Hegel) are definitely first-rate, if not monumental. But I fail to be impressed by the profundity or depth of Russell's writings in the fields of education, sociology and political theory.

If not deeply profound, neither do the works of Russell in social thought and education impress me by their striking originality. It is true that there are occasional brilliant flashes and sparks of insight but the entire works are not sustained pieces of original construction. His book, *On Education*, has great merits in the shape of indicating the use of modern

psychological knowledge for the transformation and modification of educational thought and practice. But in no case does this book impress me as a masterpiece of originality. His book *Education and the Social Order* is more sociological. It is written in a polemical style. It derives its merit from being an inspired and passionate tirade against what Russell considers to be the two strong citadels of conservatism and orthodoxy—the state and the Church. Even in this book I do not find any great originality. What accounts for the phenomenal popularity of Russell's writings as a social and educational thinker is neither depth, width and profundity of erudition nor the bold and massive sweep of original creation but his genuine sympathy for the suppressed sections of humanity including infants and adolescents, his enormous and inexhaustible fund of common sense and above all his unrivalled capacity to act as a twentieth century Voltaire mercilessly exposing the conventionalities and crudities of the established traditions. His denunciation of nationalism brings to his camp internationalists and intellectuals who are not attached to the geographical homeland. Without being a Marxist and communist he can expose the vandalism of capitalism. All the time retaining his pose of philosophic aloofness from what he calls the herd in a democracy, he can condemn aristocracy and can convincingly pass on for a socialist. He is almost a Buddhist and Gandhian in his pacifism and his condemnation of war but before the Buddhist or the Gandhian could have drawn a smile at having found Russell in his congregation, the latter would scare them away by his shockingly modern theories of sex and by his categorical imperative that religion is born out of fear. It is this capacity to administer shocks to people and to wake them up from their comfortable values and prejudices that gives to Russell his enormous popularity. To his task as a social critic and reformer Russell brings the prestige of a mathematician and philosopher. His witty remarks against the state, Church, traditional morality, sex, classes in society etc. are very effective. His lucid and vigorous style indicates a mind that is ever alert and is battling against established institutions. His prose is never prosaic but is always inspiring. These qualities have given to Russell eminence and world-wide reputation.

The most important contribution of Russell as an educational philosopher is his fundamental stress on freedom. He reminds us of Milton, Rousseau and John Stuart Mill in his quest for freedom. His enormous hostility to the dominance of the state and the Church in the field of education is a consequence of his passion for freedom. Both the state and the Church inculcate an attitude of quiet submission to their dogmas and are opposed to the use of critical enquiry for the examination of their presuppositions and assumptions. Teaching of nationalism necessarily involves teaching of a false history. Whether true or not, the dogmas of the Church are never certain but still it (the Church) would demand reverence for them. Russell is persistantly opposed to all dogmatism, fanaticism, obscurantism and parochial propaganda because any inculcation of beliefs amounts to the warping of the nature of the child. Education is not comparable to the process of physical drill and no attempt to impose credulity can be regarded as worthwhile. At a time when due to the continuing political hostilities, the omnicompetence of the state is on the increase and when the educational processes have also been exposed to the invasion of the state Leviathan, the passionate appeal of Russell for the freedom of thought and opinion, both of the teachers and the students, is a significant contribution. His warnings against the encroachments of power-holders are opportune and he has made us aware of the essential truth that freedom alone is the proper environment for the growth of creativism. Genius cannot be made to order. Free growth is the proper antidote to decadence and stagnation. Thus the concept of freedom championed by Russell is the key to educational progress and advancement.

Russell has a profound faith in the transforming power of education. In place of fanaticism, militarism, dogmatism and class pride, education, if properly conducted, can produce a generation of human beings who have health, generosity, vigor and joy. This hope and faith in the regenerative power of education is immensely satisfying. The extension of the well-being of society is dependent on a better education of human emotions and character. The increasing use of the technics of science and the rationalization of production and distribution will provide ample leisure to men and this can be properly

utilized in the creative enjoyment of the rich heritage of education and culture. But this inspiring optimism is met with a pessimistic note from a different quarter. Russell has given us a rather gloomy picture of education in the scientific society of the future. The growth of science has been brought about by the quest of knowledge. But this quest can be dictated either by love for the object and the search for its beatific vision<sup>1</sup> or by the desire to obtain power over the object. This latter or the manipulative approach is founded upon a governmental view of truth and the scientific society of the future will further accentuate this conception. There is a danger that in the scientific society, education will become an instrument of uniformity along with the radio, the cinema and the press and thus along with advertisement it will become a method of public propaganda.<sup>2</sup> In the scientific society there is the overwhelming dominance of the power impulse. Hence this society will be incompatible with the pursuit of truth and art and love.<sup>3</sup> Russell will say that this scientific society will not materialize for several centuries and hence the danger is not imminent. He also says that in his book, *The Scientific Outlook*, he is only stating one side of the picture. Russell's ideas on education in this book, however, appear to me as pseudo-Platonist. He says that in the scientific society there will be two types of education. There will be one system of education for the common people who will be trained in docility and contentment. They will be given manual training.<sup>4</sup> Those children who are prospective power-holders will be given training in intelligence, self-command and command over others. Russell prescribes rules which will govern admittance to the ranks of the power-holders and to some extent accepts the idea of transposition of ranks<sup>5</sup> as advocated in Plato's *Republic*. I feel that there is a contradiction between the grand and splendid optimism of Russell when he positively asserts that the millennium can be brought about in one generation, and his pessimistic picture of his pseudo-Plato-

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<sup>1</sup> *The Scientific Outlook*, p. 271.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 197, 195.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 274.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, Chap. xv.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 258.

nist scientific society. Either of these pictures is false. The first optimistic picture represents the triumph of psychology. The second gloomy picture represents the triumph of science. Russell had started with the premise that psychology, physiology and physics will create the better world of the future. But instead, we are faced with this paradox that psychology applied to education is pulling in one direction and science in its practical aspects is pulling in a totally different one. Russell's categorical statement that the scientific society will be incompatible with the pursuit of truth is enough to indicate that there is a huge contradiction between the two pictures. The existence of this contradiction introduces a great difficulty in the very centre of Russell's educational theory.

A significant contribution of Russell to the ethical and psychological aspects of education is that he is the spokesman of a sound, robust and firm morality.<sup>1</sup> The picture of the dominance of fate in human life that he has drawn is one of the superb pieces of literary excellence.<sup>2</sup> But he does not teach submission. He has reaffirmed in very powerful terms the Stoic attitude of heroic resistance. What cannot be prevented has to be calmly borne without making unnecessary fuss and without demanding fruitless verbal sympathy. I have been greatly inspired by his insistence on the cultivation of an attitude of impersonality by the development of a multiplicity of creative interests. Thus it is possible to rise superior to the fears of personal death. Russell is a neutralist and a sceptic in metaphysics but he will not yield to any theist in his demand for a strong, self-reliant moral character. When he says that he would prefer his children to be truthful in their thought and words, even if they suffer misfortune,<sup>3</sup> I am reminded of the prophetic statements of Mahatma Gandhi. This quest for a firm and robust moral character through education, I regard as another contribution of Russell to educational thought.

But although I am inspired by Russell's quest of a fearless truthful freedom, I do not agree with him in thinking that moral education should be complete by the time the child is six

<sup>1</sup> *On Education*, pp. 131-32.

<sup>2</sup> *Mysticism and Logic*, pp. 52-57.

<sup>3</sup> *On Education*, p. 132.

years old.<sup>1</sup> I regard this as an example of unfounded and wrong optimism. Hindu writers on educational thought are of opinion that the students should receive moral training (Achara and Brahmacharya) under the guidance of the teacher at least up to the age of twenty-four. On the question of a tentative age-limit for moral education I feel that Russell is in the wrong and his optimism is unfounded. Moral training is too complex and too important a matter to be finished by the age of six.

Russell is quite right in stating that sex education should be given to students. If given on objective and scientific lines, the imparting of sex education will give to the students a healthy outlook on this very important problem in a man's life. But his other sociological opinions with regard to sex are, to say the least, too shocking for our society. Russell treats the question of sex basically as a physiological and psychological problem. Our culture is based on the fundamentally spiritual concept of chastity. The notion of chastity is the bed-rock of our culture and it has been reinforced by the spiritual lives of Buddha, Shankara, Dayananda, Ramakrishna and Gandhi. On this problem of the sociology of sex I and Russell belong to anti-thetical schools and hence it is no use arguing.

I will also like to make some reservations with regard to Russell's views on the place of the classics in educational curriculum. The classical curriculum was established at the Renaissance. Russell finds a place for Greek and Latin in his specialized school curriculum meant for boys between the ages of fourteen and eighteen. But although he does not disparage the classical curriculum, he points out its defects.<sup>2</sup> He is worried over its purely critical and hence negative and destructive orientation. Avoidance of mistakes and literary perfection on the old pattern is its aim. By contrast, scientific education imparts to the learner the desire to build something positive and constructive.<sup>3</sup> Russell says that modern languages like French and German are preferable from every point of view to Latin and Greek.<sup>4</sup> They are not only more useful but give

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<sup>1</sup> *On Education*, p. 189.

<sup>2</sup> *Mysticism and Logic*, p. 35.

<sup>3</sup> *On Education*, p. 113.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 26.

more culture in less time.<sup>1</sup> So overwhelming in Russell's mind is the case of French and German against Latin and Greek that he says that all the little good he got from years of classical education could have been obtained in later life in a month.<sup>2</sup> Russell is truthful enough to confess that almost all his knowledge of the classics is derived from translations. My own knowledge of Greek and Latin authors is derived entirely from translations and hence I am not in a position to fight out this issue. But if we were to decide on the issue of classical education, and not specifically of Greek and Latin classics, I have great regard for the Indian classics preserved in Sanskrit and Pali. The majesty and power of the *Bhagavadagita* cannot be reproduced in any translation. I can quote the authorities of Tilak, Gandhi and Aurobindo who have testified to the supreme influence which the *Gita* had on their character and personality. If quoting authorities is a little suspect in scientific and sceptical circles, I will say from my own experience that I regard the *Bhagavadagita* and the *Dhammapada* as two of my greatest teachers. Hence in any debate on the question of the classics in education, I would advocate one compulsory paper in Sanskrit and Pali at the school and the college levels.

I have earlier stated that I regard the emphasis on the concept of comprehensive freedom as Russell's contribution to educational theory. We have earlier also discussed his views about the so-called "negative" theory of education. Russell contradicts himself on this point. In his book *Education and the Social Order* he says that he regards this school as sound so far as education of emotions is concerned but not as regards intellectual and technical education. Contrasted with the theories of education for individuality and education for citizenship he plainly states that there is more truth in the "negative" theory.<sup>3</sup> But in his paper "Education and Discipline" he forgets what he has stated in his book and says that he could not agree with this school (which thinks that education should have no positive purpose), because it was too individualistic and did not

<sup>1</sup> *In Praise of Idleness*, p. 37.

<sup>2</sup> *Sceptical Essays*, p. 194.

<sup>3</sup> *Education and the Social Order*, p. 29.

cognize the proper significance of knowledge.<sup>1</sup> This contradiction shows that Russell is not clear in his mind about the place of the negative theory in education.

Russell has never been a Marxist. He has rejected the historical materialist explanation of history but he has been influenced by the general approach of seeking the social and political background of ideas. In his book, *Education and the Social Order*, he makes a half-serious attempt to trace the sociological roots of philosophical concepts. He says that the belief in the duality and difference of matter and mind is a consequence of the existence of different teachers to teach these subjects. If a third teacher combined the functions of the first teacher who had been exclusively teaching about matter and the second one teaching separately about mind, then in that case all children would be adherents of the sometime fashionable neutral monism.<sup>2</sup> I am amazed to find Russell making this fantastic attempt to out-Marxian the Marxian. To explain the genesis of the concepts of materialism, idealism and neutralism in this way is only a grotesque travesty of judgment and will not obtain any adherence.

Russell is absolutely hostile to religious education because the eschatological and cosmological conclusions of the scriptures are doubtful and their ethical conclusions are based on supernatural sanctions. I do not subscribe to the irreligion of Russell. I do not doubt the evil and harmful influences of religion as a social institution. But so do I find evil and baneful influences of technology and science as social institutions. But is there any justification for the complete excommunication of religion? I have read the autobiographical confessions of Tolstoy, Shraddhananda and have been deeply influenced by the transforming and purifying force of religion revealed in their lives. I do not believe that a purely secularist education will give us that galaxy of powerful moral and spiritual heroes who have shed light on world history.

Russell is a great philosopher but there is no Russellian school of educational philosophy. Russell's influence on

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<sup>1</sup> "Education and Discipline", *In Praise of Idleness*, p. 203.

<sup>2</sup> *Education and the Social Order*, pp. 152-53.

educational practice has not been in any way comparable to that of John Dewey. The significance of Russell lies not in having given us any great philosophy of education nor in having been a great and influential educational reformer. He, however, is important in the history of educational thought because he has had the boldness—although sometimes this boldness has been mistaken specially with regard to problems of religion and sex—to challenge established conventions. He has successfully played the role of the critic. He has made us active and energetic from the intellectual standpoint. This is a very great service in a democratic community. He has an inexhaustible and boundless curiosity for amassing more and more knowledge. His intellectual creativism is plethoric. In these days when a little knowledge makes us proud and complaiscent, Russell has presented an elevating example of the insatiable quest for pure learning. His whole life is a vast intellectual discipline. Thus he has concretely embodied the philosophical ideals behind education which he has stated in his writings. Hence his life as well as his writings are inspirations to educationists.

## Giovanni Gentile

Giovanni Gentile (1875- ), one of the leaders in the neo-Hegelian school of Italian idealism, has been a powerful thinker in the domain of modern pedagogics.<sup>1</sup> He has the boldness to draw the subtlest educational conclusions from the concept of mind as pure act which is the dominant theme of his philosophy. One of the greatest teachers of our time,<sup>2</sup> Gentile was one of the most influential writers too. For some time he shaped the course of Italian educational policy when the fascists were in power in Italy. From 1922 to 1924 he was Minister of Public Education in Italy. Gentile has been one of the greatest interpreters of the history of European thought, especially idealism. Along with his colleague and friend, Croce, he was perhaps the most persistent intellectual influence in twentieth century Italian thought. He is credited with having introduced significant reforms in the school system of Italy.

### **I. Philosophical Foundations of Education**

Gentile's central concept like that of Hegel is the spirit. He is dissatisfied with materialism, naturalism, positivism, objectivism and scepticism. The unifying theme of his philosophy is the transcendent subject which is the pure act or sheer eternal becoming.<sup>3</sup> Gentile takes up the notion of *nous* or Logos

<sup>1</sup> Giovanni Gentile's educational ideas are contained in *The Reform of Education*, authorized translation by Dino Bigongiari (London, Beun Brothers, 1923), p. 250.

<sup>2</sup> Giovanni Gentile was professor of Philosophy at Universities in Pisa, Palermo and Rome.

<sup>3</sup> Gentile, *Teoria generale dello spirito come Atto puro*, translated into English as *The Theory of Mind as Pure Act* by H. Wildon Carr, Macmillan & Co., London, 1922. On p. 277 of this book, Gentile in expounding his idealism says : "it exalts the world into an eternal theogony which is fulfilled in the inwardness of our being."

and interprets that in the dynamistic context of modern science. Science has given a shattering death-blow to any conception of pure rest or immutable motion. It enshrines, on the other hand, the concept of perpetual becoming, a ceaseless pulsation and eternal action. Gentile, like Bergson and Whitehead, accepts the scientific stress on becoming and motion. His concept of the spirit shows the influence of science. He does not conceive of a motionless silent transcendent cosmic self but reiterates the notion of mind as Pure Act. From Hegel he derives the concept of the unity of the spirit and adds to that the theory of the spirit as pure act.<sup>1</sup> He is also deeply touched by the Christian emphasis on the spirit as benign and provident. He is not an agnostic. He offers us an activistic or *actual* type of idealism.

Gentile, like Whitehead, regards the old dualism of subject-object predication as inadequate. The concrete spirit comprehends both. It is the immanent soul of the infinite subjects and the diverse multiple objects. Truly speaking, the subjects and the objects receive in the spirit their final reconciliation. Perhaps it would be more correct to say that both the subjects and the objects are the positings or reflections or modalizations of the eternal spirit. Through the process of self-objectification the spirit aims at reflective awareness. Active self-cognition is the essence of the spirit. Hence it can be stated that the being of the spirit is perpetual immanent acting.

Art, religion and philosophy are the moments of the spirit's self-unfoldment. Art represents the triumph of subjectivity—the freedom of the artist from the trammels of external conventions and objectivism. If art vindicates the reality of the abstract subject, religion ushers in the triumph of the abstract object. The religious devotee is almost overpowered by the convincing towering majesty of God. Philosophy is the concrete mean and synthesis of art and religion. The spirit as the unity of the subject and the object is philosophy itself. Philosophy is the culmination of spiritual self-consciousness.

Since the spirit is the central reality or the highest concrete synthesis, any scheme of cultural renascence and the reconstruc-

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<sup>1</sup> Perhaps Gentile has been influenced by the Aristotelian concept of God as Pure Activity—*Actus Purus*.

tion of pedagogical curriculum should thoroughly bear its impact. Culture and education are the contents of the spirit. The teacher is not an alien influence. He is to constitute with his pupils an atmosphere vibrant with spiritual union and communion. The school is not a mechanical spatio-temporal location for the satisfaction of the wage earner's instinct but is a sanctuary of the soul. It is a hallowed place where the authors who are studied, the teacher who inspires and the pupils who participate, are all engaged in a spiritual act of synthetic creation. In the educational process there is to be unity between thinking and action. Instead of meditating over dead unconnected concepts, creative re-living in a spiritual universe is required. Educational activity is a union of cognition and action in the process of the unfoldment of the spirit.

## 2. The Ideal of Education

(a) ***Education and Freedom.*** Education is not an objective fact of nature. It is action in quest of reflective consciousness. It is free spiritual becoming. Freedom both for the teachers and the taught must be the end of all educational endeavors. The sway of uncritical reflection and instinctive reactions has to be substituted by the receptive susceptible organic *action of thought* which results in the conscious control of our environment. It is through the action of thought that our character is formed and our consciousness attains a moulding. Through the process of education the pupil is made susceptible to the impact of the rational interchange of ideas. Hence the imparting of the dead mechanical weight of unconnected scraps of information has to yield place to a loving solicitude on the part of the educators who aim to unfold the spiritual potencies of the students. The school has to become a place where the pupils are trained to conquer fear and to attain freedom.

(b) ***Education and Culture.*** Education is free creativity. Hence it implies the efflorescence of culture. Gentile pleads for the replacement of the commonly prevalent realistic concept of culture. He stresses the spirituality of culture. The realistic approach to culture conceives of it as a fact and a datum. True culture, on the other hand, is identical with spiritual

activity. Culture is not to be excavated from antique archaeological mounds or museums of classical manuscripts. Books and libraries are not to be regarded as the antecedent conditions of culture. Culture is a perpetual release of the powers of the soul through spiritual activities. Its essence is this ceaseless spiritual activity. It is a constant moulding of the soul. It is not prior to the acts of the spirit. The classicists enshrine the textual study of the past tomes as the element of culture. Such study is fruitful but for being an ingredient of culture, the past must be rescued from its dead sleeping chamber. Through the powers of interpretative understanding and sympathetic evocation the past should be fused into the dynamic contents of spiritual becoming. The business of the educator, therefore, is to make culture the pulsating content of a man's personality. Thus culture is equated with the progressive march of man to freedom. But this does not mean that culture is a far off remote ideology. It is the actualization of our spiritual personality. It is not an external spectacle or show to be preserved in museums. It is an act of spiritual freedom or liberation. The liberation of the spirit means the development or extolment of our being through free endeavors. It is not an external addition but inner self-realization. Thus culture means life and becoming. A comprehensive humanistic concept of culture is equated with a genuine unfoldment of the human personality. A living culture is the life of the human mind and education is the creation of this living culture. It is evident, that this idealistically conceived culture is not one of the subjects of educational curriculum, it is the entire content of education itself.

The spiritual interpretation of culture also comprehends science within it. The external instrumentalistic conception of science has to be replaced by a view which regards it as the actualization of humanity through the formation of the moral mind. Science is synchronistic with a devout spirit of quest and prolonged endeavors for the sake of humanity. It is, as an ingredient of personality, the perennial stirring of our being by ethical impulses.

(e) *The Ideal of Education.* We have earlier said that education means the realization of freedom. Freedom is born

in the process of the acquisition of cultured personality. Hence it can be stated that according to Gentile, the ideal of education is the growth of free spiritual activity which means the attainment of liberty and culture. This is possible through persistent philosophic endeavors at synthesis.

The Renaissance advocated a humanistic approach to education. It enshrined subjective freedom in place of the ecclesiastical domination of the Middle Ages. Art provided the model for educational endeavors during the age of the Renaissance. The Counter-Reformation was marked by the decay of art and the imitation of classicism. Classicism was triumphant up to the time when a revolt was initiated against it by romanticism. In the eighteenth and the nineteenth centuries the pattern and the model for educational enterprises was provided by religion and science. Gentile pleads for a philosophic synthesis of the subjective orientation of art towards education prevalent at the time of the Renaissance and the objective orientation towards education of science and religion prevalent in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. He is critical of all one-sided abstractions and wants the synthetic quest of liberty. The philosophic concept of synthesis is directed to the articulation of the critical and reflective spirit of man. This enshrinement of the philosophic spirit of criticism is aimed at the discovery of the diverse and multiple experiences which cover the content of the spirit as pure activity.

In some systems of educational thought attention has been given rather too much to the external filling of the contents of the mind. It is the chief merit of Gentile's spiritual theory of pedagogics that he stresses the formation of personality. If a merely surface view of things is adopted, one finds the external, egoistic, limited mortal personality. Modern psychology and science are basically concerned with this Aristotelian concept of individuality. But there is the aspect of transcendent subjectivity also. This is the real personality of man and is identical with the inmost selves of all humanity. Gentile, hence, refutes the conception of education as an empirically observable fact and, almost in a Vedantic spirit, states that education is concerned with "a mystical formation of super-individual spirituality, which is the only real, concrete person-

ality actualized by the individual." But this spirituality is not equivalent to the acquisition of some pre-established solutions. Education is spiritual action and is thus a perpetual process of ever-fresh creation. It is the cultivation of that restless inquisitive mind that is ever busy finding the solutions of the problems that arise in the course of the mental and moral journey of man. Man is to be considered as an educable animal and he has to be enabled to actualize his superior nature.

Education is thus a moral and spiritual process. The individual man is one of the fragments of humanity. Humanity is one continuous spiritual entity and hence a spiritual interpretation of the total activities of mankind is required. The evergrowing streams of the contents of collective activity are preserved in the eternal spontaneous present. The past is the matrix of the present and the present is the maturation of the past. Hence spiritual activity is the enacting of the transmutation of the heavy unrelieved weight of the past into the throbbing vital pulsations of the present. This imposes a hallowed and devout outlook on life. Liberty is oriented to the free pursuit of duties. This means the voluntary acceptance of ceaseless efforts for the continuous self-creation of the personality. The traditional momentum engineered by rigid mechanical and fixed crystallization which is the canon of pursuit in several educational institutions has to be given up. If spirit is free activity, then the true ideal of education can be the formation of a personality which is broad-minded in its sympathies, ever receptive to fresh suggestions, full of the spirit of zest which always doubts, enquires and criticizes and is vivified by the renovating power of the spirit. Only such an alert, agile, adventurous mind can be the medium for that continuous creation which is the being of the spirit.

### **3. The Unity of Education**

(a) *The School, the Teacher and the Pupils.* From the concept of mind as pure act or the reality of the transcendental subject as the eternal becoming, follows the implication that in educational plans and programs it is essential to recognize the dominant theme of comprehensive unity. Unity at all levels is essential—a spiritual unity between the teachers and

the pupils, unity between the physical, intellectual and moral aspects of education and unity between the supposedly divergent areas of discipline and freedom. From the metaphysical concept of the idea of good, Plato had drawn the political concept of the unity of the *polis* and similarly from the theory of spiritual act as becoming, Gentile has drawn the implication of unity at all levels of education.

Rousseau stood for freedom and spontaneity. Dr. Arnold was a champion of discipline in the school. As a pedagogue in the gymnasium for nearly seven years Hegel also stood for discipline and boys were afraid of him. Gentile is opposed to this distinction between freedom and discipline. Discipline is not to be considered an external imposition. It is a natural habit of the mind which students have to cultivate through serious and earnest devotion to their work. It is based on the development of concentrated attention following from absorbing interest in the work.

Another aspect of this unity of education is the repudiation of the separation between a moral and an intellectual education. Morality is an all-pervasive attitude and orientation. Gentile believes and rightly so that it is unwise to consider any department of life as morally indifferent. Every word uttered either by the teacher or the student has a moral import and every action and movement is pregnant with ethical value. Hence it is essential to cultivate a reverent consciousness of the sacred task which teaching is. Sometimes it has been supposed that moral education is concerned with the development of a firm will. But will and intellect are not rigidly separated. If intellect is developed it does lead to the realization of a spiritual meaning in life and consequently to the cultivation of character.

This concept of the unity of education implies the deep unity of the teacher and the pupil. The teacher is not a symbol of external authority. He is there not to curb the autonomy of the pupils. The process of educational evolution implies the creation of a meaningful and intense atmosphere in which both the teachers and the taught participate. The authority claimed by the teacher is not an external or formal demand but is a natural consequence of the effective action performed by him in

the educating process. There has to be achieved an unity between the personality of the teacher and the taught. The human personality is an unity and education as the creative spiritual act has to conform to the unity of personality. Thus only can we get over the narrow ideal of a fragmentary education which believes in the amassing of unrelated pieces of information. Education is a discipline of the soul and its value can be expressed only by converting it into a process of spiritual expression. Mind as pure act implies the continuous creation of an atmosphere in which the teacher and the pupil dynamically participate. The class-room is not an external place for the repetition of old texts. The spirit of the old authors has to be relived and thus the authors, the teachers and the pupils become members of an unitary spiritual family. The school can be transformed into a dedicated sanctuary for the sublimation of the human spirit. It can be made to represent the accumulated experience of ages and can be vivified with the sentiments of noble enthusiasm and immortal love. The atmosphere of educational institutions should be spiritually so dynamic that the very habitation there leads to the imbibing of culture. Culture is not an ethereal concept. It has to be an organic part of the process of learning in the school. But this sanctified conception of the school as the edifice of culture implies that the teacher is a spiritual personality and not a dignified wage-career. He has to be a repository of the reverent feelings and the trustful affection of the student population. He, in turn, has to be the symbol of a spiritual reality. He has to transcend a mechanical and purely economic-utilitarian outlook. He is to represent the ever-growing freshness and zest of a spiritual outlook. He is to enter the class-room as the dynamo of spiritual energy. His presence should ignite a spiritual spark. His journey to the class-room is a discovery of the diverse spiritual potentialities of his pupils. Every pupil attending the class has diverse spiritual powers of action. This many-sidedness and plurality has to be an object of spiritual quest. An attempt has to be made to find out the phases of spiritual dynamics revealing themselves in the personality of the pupils. Even the same pupil is a different spiritual personality from day to day. Thus the spiritual conception of education implies that the

teacher should be inspired by a moral fervour and should approach his task in an organic way. Only then can he enter the class-room "thrilled and throbbing in the anticipation of new truths to reveal." In this way he can discover the creativism of the spirit at diverse levels and in different pupils. He would take delight in awakening in pupils new areas of interest. He would explore the possibilities of directing the attention of the pupils to some of the fields which have imparted to him his major insights of life. This does not imply either a stifling of the possibilities of the pupils or any uncouth interference with their spontaneity. Rather, this would involve a transfusion into the pupil of a part of the spiritual spark of the teacher. But to fulfil this creative spiritual role, the meaning of the resplendence of the spirit as pure act, has to be kept in mind. The spirit is not a given fact. It has to be continuously recreated by a process of discovery, service and love. Thus education becomes an integral part of a spiritual pilgrimage.

(b) *Character and Physical Education.* Physical culture has been regarded as an important element in man's development. Both Plato and Aristotle favored the adequate cultivation of a man's physique. But both of them were cautious to warn that physical culture was to be viewed as an essential part of the spiritual development of man. Plato, in the *Republic*, pointed out that bodily excellence is for the sake of the soul. In the metaphysics of Aristotle, the lover is supposed to be for the sake of the higher and hence body has to be cultivated for the sake of the soul. But inspite of the metaphysical emphasis of Plato and Aristotle, in Greek culture there was the dominance of naturalism. The Greeks were not a remarkably spiritual people. Christianity stressed the salvation and beatitude of the soul and hence it tended to exalt an ascetic code of conduct. Physical education suffered under the impact of medieval Christianity because the orientation of efforts was towards the transcendent. In modern times there is the advocacy of a humanistic approach as opposed to Christian asceticism. It is good that humanism has encouraged an attitude which favors the development of all aspects of a man's existence.

Gentile stresses that physical culture also is a part of spiritual education. It is fantastic to separate the development of

will and character from the development of the body. Hence the teachers of physical culture should have a grounding not only in physiology, anatomy and hygiene but they should also have an acquaintance with the studies and disciplines which are useful in the formation of character. In course of physical education an attempt is made to develop a sense of order, discipline, agility and sportsmanship. These traits are simultaneously also the ingredients of a moral education. Hence it is to be realized that it is not possible to separate the different phases and aspects of education. There is a deep running thread of continuity. Hence even physical education has to be cultivated with the ultimate purpose of strengthening a firmness of will and purpose and a reflective consciousness of the coherence of the separate aims of existence into the meaningful apperception of spirit as pure act.

(c) *The Curriculum.* Gentile is primarily concerned with enunciating a spiritual philosophy of education. He does not go into the details of the curriculum. There are a few points, however, which are significant. He is opposed to the dominance of grammar. Grammar has a place but it should not oppress the natural and spontaneous flow of speech. The subject-matter, generally, has to be selected from the context of the environment of the pupils. Gentile pleads for the cultural role of nationalism in education. Nationalism has both a pragmatic and a philosophical meaning. It is a phase of the manifestation of the creative spirit. It is an act of the spirit in the process of self-discovery. Its pragmatic significance emerges from the fact that pupils come from a certain peculiar historical, geographical and psychological background. The curriculum has to be devised with reference to this background of national environment. There would be nothing wrong, according to Gentile, if Italian students get a thorough training in Italian history and culture. Similarly it is only proper that French students should concentrate in their curriculum, on French history, civilization and ethology. This does not mean an aggrandizement of one's national achievements. It only means a cognizance of the simple fact that our souls to a considerable extent represent the utterances of the dominant trends in our physical and social environment.

Philosophy should have a significant place in the curriculum. It has two aspects. A general philosophic education including art and religion is the ideal aim of all true educative acts. In this comprehensive sense the entire educational process is a philosophical enterprise. But philosophy has a limited technical meaning also. According to Gentile, special philosophical training is also an essential ingredient of secondary schools.

#### 4. Conclusion and Reflections

Gentile has been one of the most powerful writers of philosophical prose. He has deep and sincere convictions and he expresses them in an impressive way. I personally have been more impressed by the stylistic vigor and linguistic power of Gentile than of Croce. I do not know if this is partly due to the excellence of the English translations of Gentile's works.

What is of significance in Gentile as a philosopher of education is his vast power of intellectual integration. The central concept of his mature philosophical investigations is the dynamic creative spirit. This concept which Gentile calls mind as pure act, is the all-pervasive theme of his pedagogical thought. He identifies spirit and philosophical consciousness. Culture and education are the processes of philosophic reflection. The details of the activities of the class-room and the curriculum are to be devised and the personalities of the teacher and the pupils to be moulded in consonance with the full recognition of the vast creative powers of the spirit. Freedom and discipline as well as the physical, intellectual and moral aspects of education are to be linked up and synthesized with reference to the realization of the novel creative potentialities of the spirit. Gentile has devised an educational philosophy, keeping always the spirit in view. This is the greatness of an original thinker and philosopher. He knows how to draw the most significant implications from his basic thought. The greatness of a system does not consist in presenting a telephone-directory of all possible points and details. It is essential not to lose sight of the governing principles amidst the complex medley of factual details. There must not be an absence of details but the different points should not loosely and independently hang in the balance but must be organic phases of the central principles.

A materialist and a realist will not subscribe to the basic theme of Gentile. But he will have to grant that Gentile is one of the most powerful minds of our time. It is a literary pleasure to find Gentile drawing the most relevant pedagogical conclusions from his concept of mind as pure act.

But although I have been greatly impressed by Gentile's ability of integral philosophical synthesis, I find it difficult to accept his concept of mind as pure act which is his dominant theme. I am an idealist but still I fail to concur with the particular view sponsored by Gentile regarding a universal mind. Mind, according to Gentile, is not a thing, not *fact* but *act*, pure act which never is. Mind as pure act is immortal in its absolute essence. In consonance with the prevailing trends of western psychology, Gentile believes that mind is not a substance but act or process. In western thought there is no clear specification of the relation between the cosmic mind and the human mind. In Hegel and in Gentile, one of the greatest stumbling-blocks is that they do not always have this simple and basic point in view. Hegel may endlessly talk about the distinction between the universal and the particular and Gentile may philosophize about the infinite and finite, but after having studied some portions of Vedantic philosophy, when I turn to Hegel and Gentile, I am greatly disturbed by their failure to specify the distinction between the universal divine mind and the limited human mind. The failure to stick to this elementary but immensely important distinction introduces fatal flaws in the otherwise gigantic intellectual edifices which these philosophers have built up. I do not attack the intellectual right of a philosopher to raise consciousness or mind to the highest pinnacle. But I want to warn that the philosopher must bear in mind some simple but important points. He has to keep in view that according to the findings of modern anthropology and sociology mind bears the traces of its social emergence. There are differences of considerable significance between the minds of the primitive people and the civilized human beings. Another point of significance is, as the medical scientists have pointed out, that the functioning of the mental apparatus are determined by the physiological apparatus. Some evolutionists have pointed out that in the course of

terrestrial and cosmic evolutionary progression, mind is a late emergent. Matter appears first and then comes life and latterly emerges mind. I think that any sane and plausible view of cosmology has to take into account these insights of sociology, anthropology, medical science and evolutionism. A theory of mind as pure act or transcendent subjectivity or eternal present may testify to the romantic power of poetic imagination of the philosopher but it has to wrestle heavily with the insights and conclusions of other relevant disciplines. I have an emotional sympathy with the idealistic conclusions of Gentile but I find that there are so many phases and phenomena in the universe that a simple theory of mind as pure act does not satisfy me. It leaves me empty. The world still appears to be enigmatic and chaotic. I feel that a more comprehensive philosophy is the need of the hour, which can synthesize the major abstractions of the physical and natural sciences with the propositions of the social science, ethics and literature. I believe that any one-sided abstraction is inadequate. The greater the synthesis the more can we approximate to an acceptable view of truth and reality. Hence I think that Gentile's conception of mind as pure act, significant as it is in terms of having imparted a modernistic scientific tinge to the spiritual view of reality, needs considerable amendment and re-interpretation in the light of modern knowledge.

Gentile's aim was to synthesize spiritual universalism and nationalism in his educational philosophy. He derived the concept of the spirit from Hegel's philosophy. Nationalism he brought from his Italian background. As an incentive to the discovery of the soul of a people—*Volksgeist*—nationalism has a great cultural significance. It has accentuated a curious and at times reverent attitude to the past and its heroes and memories. It has imparted a bond of cohesiveness and homogeneity to people. At times it has made a people survive amidst great frustrations and political anguish. But nationalism has not justified the noble hopes reposed in it by Mazzini, Aurobindo and Renan. It, at times, becomes the cry of interested groups who want to exploit other sections. In Germany and Italy it had a proneness to be identified with the fascistic aggrandizement of power and conquest of other

peoples. It should be a warning that so great a philosopher of the dynamic nature of the mind and its divinity and a supporter of the Christian view of the world as Gentile, became the protagonist of Mussolini's fascistic policy.<sup>1</sup> This shows that nationalism is not an unmixed blessing. Hence I urge that the nationalistic bias in education has to be carefully watched.

As a philosopher of idealism, Gentile advocates the organization of the educational curriculum in terms of the spiritual creative act. It is true that we need philosophical synthesis. This synthesis has to be a harmonious reconciliation of both contemplation and action. There is to be the contemplation, however, not only of abstract concepts and the categories of cognitional understanding but of the world and its problems too. In an era of grossly mundane and secularistic considerations we have lost sight of the powers of spiritual harmony. It is gratifying to note that Gentile has inculcated an attitude of devout reverence towards the teaching profession. Both the teachers and the pupils are to be united in a spiritual process of soul-communion. This spiritual stress is of the uttermost significance in the Indian perspective. Our educational institutions are becoming too mechanically-oriented. The teachers are getting imbued with a trade union ideology. Students are becoming riotous, frustrated and job-hunters. The people outside have a sneaking admiration for the holders of all-India services. They have slender genuine regard for the university and the teachers. At such an hour it is wise to remember the noble teaching of Gentile that the school is a spiritual sanctuary and a place for the cultivation of our soul. The aim of the school is to provide spiritual delight and an all-round chastening and ennoblement. It is essential to cultivate science and technology. For the sake of survival in the complex world of modern civilization, it will be suicidal to neglect science. But

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<sup>1</sup> When Gentile was minister of education in the first Mussolini Cabinet he had stated that schools should be employed "for strengthening the nation and making Fascists.....The state is, as it ought to be, a teacher.....In the school, the state comes to consciousness of its real being." Quoted in Alfonzo F. Myers and Clarence O. Williams, *Education in a Democracy* (N. J. Prentice Hall, 1958), p. 172.

science cannot provide a meaning to our existence. It cannot, by itself, provide a philosophy of life. Education has to provide a total and integral outlook. It is imperative to have a perspective of comprehensive coherence. Gentile's significance lies in this that he has stressed the meaning of a philosophical approach to life. There is an element of gigantic uncertainty in life. Amidst the trials and torments of life, a philosophic realization of the sense of cosmic majesty and love can provide a depth of consolation and an intensity and wealth of incentive to work. Education is not only a preparation for such a philosophical outlook, in this lies its sole justification.\*

## *A Synthetic Approach to the Philosophy of Education*

**A** philosophy of education is integrally connected with the prevailing philosophy of life and culture.<sup>1</sup> Whether we examine the educational systems of the Sparta of Lycurgus, or of Periclean Athens, or whether we take a look at the medieval cloisters and schools of Albertus or Thomas Aquinas or Nicholas of Cusa, or we examine the curriculum of the universities of Cordova or Paris or whether we take a look at the gigantic technological institutes of the industrial countries of the West —everywhere we find a close connexion between the patterns of education and the dominant conceptions of life and the changes in the orientation to life are reflected in the changes in the curricula, methods and technics of education.<sup>2</sup> If the influential Indian philosophers and sages have regarded the acquisition of transcendental knowledge (*parā vidyā*) as the highest aim of a man, since Bacon and Descartes the modern men of science and industry accept the values of conquest of

<sup>1</sup> This chapter incorporates the points made in my speeches on "The Aims of Education" at the U.P. Govt. Seminar at Mussoorie on June 4, 1956, and on "True Education" at the Patna University Wheeler Senate Hall on August 12, 1960.

<sup>2</sup> For philosophy of education, John S. Brubacha, *Modern Philosophies of Education* (New York, McGraw Hill, 1939) ; Franz De Houre, *Philosophy and Education* (New York, Ban Ziger, 1931) ; Ross L. Finney, *A Sociological Philosophy of Education* (New York, Macmillan, 1928) ; Human H. Horne, *The Democratic Philosophy of Education* (New York, Macmillan, 1933) ; Edward A. Fitzpatrick, *Readings in the Philosophy of Education* (New York, Appleton-Century, 1936) ; Quincy A. Kuehner, *A Philosophy of Education* (New York, Prentice-Hall, 1935) ; William H. Kilpatrick, *Source Book in the Philosophy of Education* (New York, Macmillan, 1934).

the forces of external nature as the dominant imperative of a technological commercial civilization. Some of the "philosophies" of education can be thus represented.<sup>1</sup>

(i) **Transcendental** : In the Upanishads and Samkara. Also in the Christian philosophers who believed in beatitude, blessedness and the kingdom of God.

(ii) **Perfectionist and Liberal** : Stressing the full development of the total facilities and capacities of men. Aristotle, Locke, Rousseau, Confucius and the 17th century Western Humanists may be said to belong to this group. It should be remembered, however, that a writer can belong to two groups. In ancient India, perfection of character or *aryatva* was regarded as the ideal of education. Rama and Krishna are revered because it is believed that they embodied this virtue. Buddha represents the perfection of moral character because he was ready, it is said, to sacrifice his life even for the sake of a deer.

(iii) **Utilitarian** : Inculcates that education is for earning a "living" through the pursuit of some "vocation". Gandhi's "Basic Education" will be included here.

(iv) **Sociological** : Stresses that education is for "Citizenship". The Greeks believed in this ideal. Mannheim's sociological conception of education and Dewey's emphasis on sharing in present conjoint experiences may be included in this category. Those social thinkers who sponsor the pursuit of accommodation, adjustment and socialization through the cultivation of group responsiveness also may be included in this group.

To evolve a comprehensive philosophy of education in India today, we have to adopt a synthetic approach. There is present in India, a strong revivalistic note as is manifested in the *Gurukulas* and the *Rishikulas*. On the other hand, some of the significant elements of scientific industrialism are reflected in the modern polytechnic institutes and national institutes of Physics and Chemistry. We are not decided about what we want in our country. Is our objective the transplantation of a centralized industrial civilization on the pattern of the Occident

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<sup>1</sup> This scheme represented below was discussed by the author at a lecture delivered at the Patna Training College on October 4, 1958.

or do we dream of the revival of the hoary Vedic and Ramananic past? The government of the day seems wedded to a scientific and socialistic civilization but quite a substantial body of Indian citizens have a passionate longing for the resuscitation of the small-scale rural patterns which enshrined the values of Hindu Civilization. We, thus, are not yet very specific in our aims and hence our students do not imbibe any coherent philosophy. Our intellectuals and students as well, are going through a process of mental schizophrenia. This makes it doubly essential that a clear approach be evolved towards education.

The ancient Greeks were right in stressing gymnastic and music. The physical base (the *annamaya* and the *prānamaya kosas*) has first to be perfected. Since man is a somatopsychic organism, a strong physique is essential both for obtaining success in the various struggles of life and for being the receptacle of intellectual knowledge.<sup>1</sup> With physical weakness, the individual will not be prompted to undergo the huge toil involved in intellectual efforts.<sup>2</sup> Hence we have to accept the Platonic-Aristotelian insight and along with our program of theoretical acquisition, the necessary physical basis must not be neglected. A good physique being the most significant basis for all individual and social progress, its development should be a top-priority in any scheme of educational planning. Physical development, however, should not be confused with a narrowly conceived athleticism and muscle-culture which if practised with too much of exclusive attention often lead to coarseness and brutishness.

There is also some truth in what Samkara and Thomas Aquinas say. According to the Hindu spiritual leader, knowledge is for the sake of emancipation (विद्याहिका, व्रत्यगतिप्रदा या). In the present-day sensate and materialistic civilization one may not be tempted to make efforts towards spiritual liberation and union with an eternal blissful being. But any sound system of education must provide for mental peace and integration of

<sup>1</sup> Satyadeva Parivrajaka, *Jnāna ke Udyāna Me* and *Sanjivani Buti* (2 vols.), in Hindi.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Francis Thompson, *Health and Holiness* (Herder, 1905); Wood, *Health and Education*.

personality. This requires a transcendence of too much of engrossment in the details of humdrun existence. Hence a spiritual outlook is needed even if one may not accept the details of Samkarite or Thomistic metaphysics. The quest of knowledge for the sake of beatitude is also exemplified in the life of Thomas Aquinas. He makes provision for both faith and reason.<sup>1</sup> Reason is certainly and absolutely needed to probe into the secrets of the cosmos<sup>2</sup> but life cannot be built only on the basis of reason. It will be silly to think that we can argue out with the student the formulas of moral life before he sets out on the path of moral endeavors. Faith in moral values is essential to give a meaning to our existence. It is possible to construct a system of naturalistic ethics or humanist secular ethics. But this is realizable only as an intellectual ideal. G. E. Moore in England and M. N. Roy in India have championed such a non-religious approach to ethics. But, at least in the context of modern India, I have grave doubts that a moral code divorced from religion would have adequate sanction to obtain credence. From the practical standpoint a moral code divorced from any religious faith, appears 'a difficult proposition'.<sup>3</sup> It is possible that a blind acceptance of complete secularism and materialism may damage the moral fiber of our student population. Modern democratic society is associated with the ideal of secularism. While secularism in the sense of state indifference to religious ideologies and equal treatment by the state to all religious denominations is an acceptable ideal,

<sup>1</sup> In the *Divine Comedy*, Dante pleads for a synthesis of reason (symbolized by Virgil) and revelation (symbolized by Beatrice). In the modern scientific world it is difficult to believe in revelation. I am only pleading for a firm faith in moral values.

<sup>2</sup> The reaction against intellectualism and rationalism represented by Rousseau and Tolstoy was a very temporary trend in Western thought.

<sup>3</sup> "Let us with caution indulge the superstition, that morality can be maintained without religion. Whatever may be conceded to the influence of refined education on minds of peculiar structure, reason and experience both forbid us to expect, that national morality can prevail in exclusion of religious principle." (George Washington's Farewell Address).

it should not be taken to mean the absolute exclusion of moral and religious teaching. The basic concepts of morality should be taught in centres of learning. Even scientists are giving up their arrogant attitude of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Now they state that they only analyze some of the segments of natural phenomena and they are reluctant to provide cosmic philosophies of life. The growing awarness of the limitations of reason provides an additional ground why the Thomistic view of supplementing faith and reason should be considered to have some plausibility. I am not pleading that faith in the dogmatics of Hinduism or Christianity be resuscitated in this critical age. I am only saying that firm faith in a scheme of values is essential even for success in the ordinary domains of life.

In our university curricula it is essential to provide a synthesis of the East and the West. It will be ridiculous to ostracize Western sciences and technology.<sup>1</sup> But with them the abiding persistent part of our spiritual and moral heritage must also be taught to the students. The great stream of knowledge and ethics which was developed in the East must not be allowed to languish. Hence it is essential to integrate as much as possible of the apparently divergent and incongruent streams of intuitions. The test of wisdom is this reconciling power of synthesis. Whitehead, and Hegel before him, have stressed the cultural and philosophical significance of synthesis. At the present hour it is extremely unwise to develop any isolationist outlook. The moral and spiritual heritage of the East has to be accepted along with the imbibing of the concepts and propositions of Western sciences. Hence what is needed is an integral philosophy of education which will attempt a harmonious synthesis of the significant ideals of education developed, so far, by thinking humanity and will foster the quest of social welfare, economic justice and moral and spiritual emancipation of man.

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<sup>1</sup> It is a tribute to the influence of the West that several of the great political and social leaders of Asia and Africa were either educated in the West or had spent considerable time there. Organized intellectual life has a very strong and long tradition in the West. Even Thomas Aquinas and Hegel had M.A. degrees, and Karl Marx had a Doctor's degree from the University of Jena.

This integral synthetic approach will provide "active wisdom" which is so important today. By the systematic and prolonged interpretation and criticism of present experiences it will evoke initiative and foster zest and dynamism. Education, thus conceived as the process of accentuation of responsiveness, will provide the stimulus to the students and also enhance the dignity and prestige of the teacher.

In order that this comprehensive conception of education be realized, the teacher has to be given an elevated stature. He has to play a dynamic and creative role in modern India. Some of the greatest figures of the modern world have been teachers. Einstein was a teacher and so have been Whitehead, James, Dewey, Wallas, Max Weber and Laski. They have added their quota to the moulding of the direction of civilization. They were content with performing their jobs in a spirit of dedication. They coveted no external honours and political posts. In ancient India, teachers like Drona and Vasistha enjoyed great prestige because of their character and personality. They did not seek the intervention of the political rulers for selfish gains. Due to the persistence of adverse political circumstances our sense of values has become adversely affected. If the teachers want to have the revival of the prestige and esteem they had in the remote past, they have to obtain a deep and intimate knowledge of the subject matter they are handling and they have to approach the student population with an intuitive appreciation of the reverence for each human person. Only their comprehensive spiritual approach will be the foundation of the educational reconstruction of India.



PART TWO

SOME PROBLEMS OF EDUCATION



## *Language Teaching : Problems and Suggestions*

### **1. Language : Its Role and Function**

**L**anguage is one of the most significant media for inter-subjective communication. As the most explicit and rationally developed means for the transmission of thought, it has made possible the socialization of man and has been thereby a potent medium for the growth of civilization and culture. First of all, it is a medium for inner-communication. It makes possible for the human being to think on a diverse set of problems. It organizes the numerous experiences which a man encounters as a social being. Through the means of linguistic symbols and concepts it is possible to incorporate an element of rational order and coherence in the pluralistic medley of countless disorganized bits of experiences. This process of linguistic systematization distinguishes the social living human beings from the dull ever-repetitive inertia of animal life. Secondly, the development of ideative patterns makes possible the processes of human thought and their ready communication to other individuals and groups. How brutish and nasty would have been the life of man if he would not have been able to express his emotions to other persons? Language has made possible the expression of our emotions. A mother fondles the child, a friend expresses sympathy for a friend in bereavement and a poet gives permanent shape to his temporary feelings at having seen a cuckoo or a bunch of daffodil flowers—all these are done through the linguistic medium. Without going into the details of the differences between evocative language—or the language of emotion and symbolic language—on the language of thought, it is possible to assert that language is one of the dominant factors in the social communication and inter-dependent living of man.

Language thus facilitates the accumulation of the meaning of individual and group experiences. Thereby it is an important

instrument in the literary embodiment of the social life and mind. The diverse play and expressions of an innumerable number of human beings find their incarnation in the shape of language. It is possible to re-experience the pathos of a Valmiki, the disenchantment of a Samkara, the devotion of a Tulsidas and the furious rage of a Marx, because these have become a permanent part of the spirit of the people through linguistic symbols.

So far we have analyzed the two functions of language. First, it is a medium for the generation of thought-activity and emotional responses, on an individual level. The conative, cognitive and volitional activities of the individual are carried on and experienced through the means of language. The more comprehensive and richly developed the terminology of a language is, the easier becomes the expression of human psychological processes. Secondly, language is a medium of social living and collective growth. It is the medium for the externalization of the spirit of a people. Language is an entity of definite morphology and this serves to reveal the mentality of the people who have fashioned it. The sonorous sounds of Sanskrit and the high consonants of German express the temperament of the people who have been the fashioners and users of these languages. This distinction between the individual and social aspects of language that we have made is only for the purposes of abstract theoretical analysis. In any concrete linguistic situation the two aspects interact and inter-penetrate. A child brought up in the atmosphere where Magadhi is the popular dialect will pronounce the same Hindi or English words differently, from a child trained in the atmosphere where Bhojpuri is the popular dialect. As adults, these two children will tend to perpetuate their intonations and they may also be proud of their different intonations but a little reflection will point out to them that they are the unconscious but willing instruments of two linguistic organizations. The ready assimilation of the linguistic patterns of a group, by the individual, thus makes it imperative that great care should be taken about language teaching. The vital relationship between language and personality makes the task of language teaching a very responsible social job.

## 2. General Principles of Language Teaching

According to Hindu thought the word is not merely a temporary medium of verbal communication but is impregnated with eternity. The Mimansakas in India believed in the eternity and inmutability of words. The theories of *Shabda Brahman* and *Sphotavada* were expounded by the school of grammarians and the immense grandeur of words was thereby propounded. The concept of the eternity of words was also used to prove the revelatory character of the Vedic scriptures. Although one may not accept all these theories and arguments in the modern scientific age, nevertheless we may accept that words have deep influences on a man's psychic structure and in that sense it can be said that they (words) transcend their immediate shape and being. They are pregnant with deep meaning and influence. Hence in language teaching it is essential that the proper environment should be created wherein boys can imbibe the true spirit and significance of words. The import of words has to be conveyed by their correct use in the generally elevated tone of the environment, rather than by the mechanical recourse to word books and dictionaries. I am not at all suggesting the discarding of dictionaries. Far from that, I do recognize the immense significance of dictionaries for the expert as well as for the amateur. I am only stressing that the real meaning of words and the way to utilize them is learnt in the environment which is charged with the mission of using the right type of words. It follows that we have to be immensely careful in our choice and use of words and phrases both at home and the school. Through this process of organic contact with the environment boys learn more of language than through the dull repetition of synonyms culled from dictionaries. The recognition of this principle and the desire to make it a concrete guide for action increase our responsibilities as educators for the future generations.

The importance of the environment implies that if we want our boys and girls to speak and write correctly and elegantly, we have to make our conversations more dignified and meaningful. If the conversational side can be taken care of, more than half of the work of language teaching can be immensely simpli-

fied. The formidable task of learning by rote the rules of grammar and mastering its technicalities would be considerably lessened if the adults, especially the guardians and teachers, took care to correct and elevate the tone of their conversations. What I am saying, requires for its full realization, the education also of the female folk at home. It can be supported on the basis of experience that in the processes of language teaching, the task of making the pupils unlearn their inaccurately imbibed constructions is more difficult than making them learn new things of the right sort. Hence it is essential to create the proper linguistic environment. The guides and the teachers are to take care that even during drill and games hours boys do not use the improper or wrong constructions.

This principle of the creation of the proper linguistic environment both at home and the school can have several implications and can be illustrated with reference to foreign languages. Illustrated magazines and geographical and historical charts are very useful aids in the teaching of foreign languages. It has often been said, and very rightly, that the best method of learning a foreign language is to go to that country and live there for a few years. The principle behind this statement is also the same—to live in the right type of linguistic environment. We have to organize the environment of foreign language teaching with the point of view of reproducing, as if, a part of that country whose language we are teaching. Hence boys can be encouraged to carry on correspondence with students in foreign countries. The use of picture cards is very common in American social circles. These can also be used in the creation of the proper linguistic environment. The gramophones and the radio can also be utilized. The possibilities of the radio for language teaching are immense and by the right type of arrangement of programs, the task of language teaching will be facilitated. The use of tape-recorders is also increasing in the U.S.A. When I was a student at the University of Chicago, a fellow American student was learning Sanskrit and for his sake I read and recited several Sanskrit passages as well as verses from the *Bhagavadgita*. He got them all on the tape-recorder. Thus his ears could be trained to hear and to recognize immediately Sanskrit words and sounds. The great merit of the gramophones, radio

and tape-recorders is that they provide simultaneously instruction and recreation. It is possible to teach the correct pronunciation of words by means of the radio and in a very effective manner. The radio can be of considerable help in language teaching and through short stories, recitations, dialogues, speeches and news broadcasts, it is possible to provide simultaneously relaxation, recreation, pronunciation-training and instruction.

Recitations and songs also help to foster the proper linguistic environment. I developed a taste for Sanskrit studies by being moved with the melodious sounds of Sanskrit chants and prayers. I have also seen that senior members of my family, who had no formal Sanskrit education, were able to understand the meaning of Hindu scriptures like the *Bhagavadgita*, simply because they used to recite it daily. It is said that Karl Marx learnt from Hegel the practice of reciting poems and passages from foreign poets and writers, in order to train his memory. Melodious Sanskrit and Bengalee songs can be learnt by Indian students. This will not only provide linguistic training but will also impart a catholic and comprehensive orientation to the study of Indian culture.

Another significant element in the creation of the proper linguistic environment is to stress the development of the habit of reading. The mental organism of boys is a very plastic material and it can be trained to absorb many elements of literature, ethics, religion and history by proper training. The stress should be not on the imposition of an undigested mass of information but on evoking, eliciting and developing the latent curiosity of students. In this process of arousing and fostering the curiosity of students, an important element is the encouragement given to private reading. Class reading and the preparation of class lessons are important but private reading has also to be encouraged. The habit of private reading is an important element in the cultural training of an intelligent human being. Hence this habit has to be fostered. It will provide an important supplement to the other apparatus of language teaching. Private reading has been encouraged in our culture in a sanctified form in the concept of *Svadhyaya*. We can give to this term an extended meaning. The reading of newspapers,

magazines, pamphlets and books constitutes important help in the teaching of language. To the rather serious atmosphere of class work private reading provides a necessary change and is useful at the same time.

### 3. Some Specific Principles of Language Teaching

Before students can perform the synthetic cognitive process of understanding the meaning of a sentence by bringing together the significance of the separate words, it is essential to recognize the specific words.<sup>1</sup> The definite recognition of the structure and pronunciation of words should precede the interpretation of words. After that the understanding of different words has to be synthetized together and this constitutes *the dialectics of linguistic apperception*. But it is no use making the boys cram a large number of words at a time. It is the advantage of the direct method that the associative connexion between the object and its linguistic symbolization in the shape of the word is strengthened by the attempt to present the objects, but this process has definite limitations. It is not possible to keep all the objects in frontal physical immediacy. However, so much is clear that a dynamic orientation is needed and this will necessitate the choice of reading material with reference to the local environment. The Indian students will more easily recognize words like elephant and banyan tree than the rhinoceros and the oak tree.

The importance of the selection of the right type of reading material is being realized now on a greater scale. In this choice we have to follow a pragmatic criterion. The essential words which refer to the frequently repetitive physical processes of the normal human life, like doing, acting, sleeping, should have precedence over the words which refer to the abnormal

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<sup>1</sup> H. E. Moore, *Modernism in Language Teaching* (Cambridge, W. Heffer and Sons., 1925) ; Michael West, *Language in Education* (Patna University Readership Lectures, 1928, Longmans, 1929) ; J. J. Findlay, *Modern Language Learning* (Gregg Publishing Co.) ; Dr. Hedgcock, *Practical French Teaching* ; Hutton, *Teaching of Modern Foreign Languages* ; H. E. Palmer, *Scientific Study and Teaching of Languages* and *Colloquial English*.

and the remote. This adoption of the pragmatic criterion in the choice of words will involve a psychological and sociological study of the patterns of the life-situation of the particular group and society where the students are studying. The process of the choice and compilation of word-lists is very essential in teaching a foreign language. Since in learning a foreign language almost every word has to be learnt, hence it is important to utilize the resources of the students in an economic manner. Words whose use-frequency is relatively small should not be imposed at the cost of words with a high degree of use-frequency.

#### **4. Hindi as the Medium of Instruction**

Of late, the cry has been raised in certain circles that the standard of educational achievement is going down in the country because of the adoption of Hindi as the medium of instruction in schools and colleges in several places. I do not find much plausibility in this argument. I favor the adoption of Hindi as the medium of instruction not only in schools but also in colleges and universities, at least in the Hindi-speaking provinces. I support my view on three grounds. First, there is the political argument. Just as any proposal not to use French as the medium of instruction in France or not to use German as the medium of instruction in Germany will be regarded with ridicule and contempt, so also the time should fast come in this country when any proposal against Hindi, at least in Northern India, would be laughed out and not thought to be a subject of serious discussion. It is no use substantiating my statement with the argument that the use of a common language fosters the sentiments of national patriotism. Our loyalties to our culture, traditions and nation are only skin-deep as long as we do not experience the feeling of their greatness through our own language. Second, there is the historical argument. The debate that is being carried on in our country between the respective protagonists of Hindi and English is not something unique. Since the Renaissance, for about two hundred years a similar controversy was being carried on in Western Europe. The learned and the ecclesiastical circles enthusiastically championed the cause of Latin because that was

the scholastic language. The European vernaculars like French, German and English were then only developing and did not have any impressive library. But the party of vernacular won the debate and their claims were supported and finally vindicated by history. The champions of English lament the paucity of good literature in Hindi. But there is not much force in this argument. Even the rather grudging concessions that have been made to Hindi, have led to a tremendous ferment in the country and the rapidity with which books are being produced and published in Hindi, is a matter of immense gratification. I am not pleading for the elimination of English. I would much rather advocate that for those students who contemplate an academic career, it should be imperative that they be familiar with at least one more European language besides English. The rather unbelievable richness of English language and literature is persistently present in my mind. I am a great votary of the immense mass of knowledge preserved in the English literature. But I am enamored of the dream that Hindi also should one day be equally rich. For the present, our boys should learn in Hindi what can be learnt through the Hindi medium. It should be an obligatory function of our republic to make available to our citizens the knowledge contained in English language through the medium of Hindi. I am certain that once we firmly agree on making Hindi the medium of higher teaching, books of a standard character will multiply fast in Hindi.

There is a third argument for the support of Hindi as the medium of higher instruction and this has special reference to the rather seductive counter-argument that the adoption of Hindi leads to a decline in the standard of intellectual achievement. But one does not have to be bewildered at what I consider the mirage of English. For over ninety percent of our boys, the much talked of claim of the superior achievement made possible through English amounts only to greater perfection in learning by rote the text-books and a more accurate fidelity in repeating this material in examination copy-books. It is a process of self-hypnotization and group deception rather than of genuine understanding. The parade of big concepts and philosophical abstractions lulls us into the self-righteous belief that knowledge has been acquired. But this is all

a sleepy sort of intellectual acquisition. The student body is terrified by the enormously powerful linguistic apparatus created in the English language and the height of educational perfection is equated with the reproduction of that apparatus in examination answer-books. The adoption of the Hindi medium may weaken this conceptual fortress temporarily, but I am confident it will provide greater penetration into the subject matter. In the process of examining answer-books of students in the top University classes I have discovered, to my surprise, that eighty percent of the students reproduce mere book material. They fail miserably when they have to write even some sentences of their own to integrate two paragraphs which they are reproducing from books. To the champions of English medium, I will point out that almost all the answer-books, written in English, repeat even the concluding paragraphs from some book or the other. Even when the question requires "giving your reasons for the answer," the reasons providing answers are borrowed. This process of killing our creativity and originality in the name of the mirage of greater excellence obtained through the English medium leads to national waste. I sincerely believe that we can teach the most difficult things in Hindi and the student body will derive greater benefit. My argument is based on experiment. For the last twelve years I am teaching the political philosophy of Hegel to B.A. Honours and M.A. students. In almost all the batches I have found students talking of Hegel's theories of the synthesis of subjective freedom and objective freedom, of the state as the actuality of the ethical substance and the civil society as being a basis of the modern state. We tend to regard all this talk as genuine understanding but in the processes of tutorial discussions it is found that all this is only a verbal subterfuge and genuine understanding has been seriously retarded. But when I have taught these same things through the Hindi medium, I find that the students attain a greater penetration although they may not be able to handle with care borrowed concepts. A direct confirmation of my statement I have also discovered. When political philosophy is taught through the English medium, the only questions that the student body asks of the teacher are the questions that were

previously set in examinations. But teaching through the Hindi medium leads to genuine discussions which proceed from a greater understanding of the subject matter. Hence I want to caution the champions of English medium against indulging in the device of raising the slogan of the decline of intellectual standard because of the adoption of the Hindi medium. A similar slogan of a probable decline in civilization in India was raised by the champions of British imperialism against Indian freedom.

### **5. The Place of Sanskrit in Modern Indian Education**

The noble and rich heritage of Indian culture is contained in Sanskrit literature. The Vedas and Upanishads, the Gita and Vedanta, the writings of Valmiki, Vyasa, Kalidasa, Samkara and Ramanuja, the dialectics of Dingnaga, Dharmakirti and Santarakshita embody some of the most magnificent and priceless creations of the human mind and soul. In our educational curriculum some selection from this vast corpus must be included. It is one of the most ennobling of the literary traditions. The great moralizing influence of Sanskrit literature on the Indian character has been testified to by the lives of the great men whose minds have fed upon this vast and perennial fount of inspiration. The persistant quest in Sanskrit literature is for the stable and permanent kingdom of ends. Against the temporary charms and amusements of the fleeting present, Sanskrit literature teaches us to look for the more solid perfection of human moral and spiritual personality. Even when it appears to be sensuous, the contact with the universal is not lost. It is not fair to say that in Sanskrit there is no place for the depiction of the dramatic vivacity and tragic intensity of human life. We have only to read the *Mahabharatam* to be convinced of the comprehensive orientation of Sanskrit literature. If the *Nitisatakam* of Bhartrihari makes us worldly-wise, the *Vivekachudamani* of Samkara gives us a sense of philosophic disenchantment. Hence this enormously rich, vital and powerful literature must be one of the principal sources for the creation of the Indian mind. It is essential reading for obtaining a philosophy of life. The noble and powerful ideals of life represented by such

concepts like *jñāna*, *vijnāna*, *tapas*, *sādhanā*, *vrata*, *satya* etc. must vitalize our thoughts and aspirations.<sup>1</sup> The continuity of the Indian historical soul is also indicated through this literature. The evolution of Sanskrit literature itself is a great historical theme. There is a historical content behind the *Raghuvamsam* and the *Kiratarjuniyam*. In the study of Sanskrit literature, we experience a sense of the intimacy of historical memories which have been provided literary expressions therein and this experience is a necessary phase in the solidification of the sense of creative Indian citizenship. Hence the problem of the teaching of Sanskrit has to be taken seriously by all educators.

In Sanskrit education the aim should be not merely the acquisition of the correct vocabulary and grammatical exactitude but also the aesthetic appreciation of its vast symbolic meaning. It has to be read and appreciated as a revelation of the Indian spirit. What I am saying may appear metaphysical and utopian at least for the early stages of education. But it is not really so. I am only stating that in the course of language teaching we have to be careful not only for linguistic exactitude and grammatical definiteness but should also develop the faculty of the students in the independent appreciation of the moral and cultural significance of this literature as an expression of the Indian mind.

There are several defects in the teaching of Sanskrit language at present. In the traditional centres of Sanskrit education like the *tols* and *pathsalas* there is an unbalanced concentration on the study of one specific subject. It is true that ours is the age of specialization. But specialization is needed at an advanced stage of training. In the earlier stages it is necessary to give the students a panoramic vision of Indian history, culture and politics. Even the student of the *Siddhanta Kaumudi* should

<sup>1</sup> Dayananda was devoted to the Vedic ideals, Vivekananda and Rama Tirtha were exponents of the Vedantic philosophy and Tilak, Aurobindo, Gandhi and Malaviya inculcated the teachings of the Gita. They became great because they tried to embody in their lives the ideals they preached. A very dynamic philosophy of life is contained in the Vedic prayer : "पश्येम शरदः शतं, जीवेम शरदः शतम्" and in the Mahabharatan shloka : "अग्रतश्चनुरो वेदान् प्रृष्ठतः सशरं धनुः ।"

have a faint idea of the fundamental rights of the Indian citizen. Hence although I am convinced of the soundness of the plan of lifelong concentration in one branch of study I plead that during the earlier stages of Sanskrit teaching the curriculum has to be broad-based. If we want the extension of Sanskrit studies we have to aim at creating better citizens and not merely anachronistic museum-specimens.

The teaching of Sanskrit in the schools and colleges has also been defective. The principle of the creation of the proper linguistic environment which I have discussed earlier has also to be borne in mind at this point. I plead for a simplification of Sanskrit grammar. What is the use of learning the *Dhaturupa* in all the ten *Lakaras*? Three *Lakaras* (*Lat*, *Langa* and *Lrita* or perhaps even *vidhilinga*) should be sufficient. In the selection of passages and stories, great care should be taken to see that the themes are not abstract and unfamiliar. Stories and lives of great men which the student has already known during the course of his studies of Hindi should also find a place in Sanskrit readers. Since the boys will be already knowing the stories, hence it will be easy for them to find the meaning. Thus the combined burden of obscure theme and unfamiliar language will be eliminated and the process of learning will be facilitated.

The teaching of Sanskrit through the English medium has been a great error. The persistence of this method, even in independent India, is a grave blunder and is an eloquent tribute to the slavish habits of the framers of educational policy in our country. I think it unwise to teach the works of Sayana and Yaska to Hindu boys through the medium of a foreign tongue, howsoever hallowed that tongue be with the names of Shakespeare and Milton. It seems perverse to ask prospective M.A. students to translate the Rigvedic hymns to Agni in English and to judge the competence of the boys in Vedic Sanskrit through their performance in English. Much of the beauty of the original Sanskrit is lost when we teach the *Sakuntalam* and the *Uttararamacharitam* through the English medium. The best way to teach Sanskrit is through the medium of highly Sanskritized Hindi. In this way an occasion will be provided for the more intimate appreciation of the passages or poems in question.

For the purpose of popularizing Sanskrit it may be advisable to adopt one standard script for the writing and printing of Sanskrit books. In this case, I would earnestly plead for the adoption of the Devanagari script. The adoption of one common Devanagari script for Sanskrit, at least throughout the whole of northern India, will also provide a solid cultural bond of unification of the people. Later on, the use of the Devanagari script for Sanskrit, can be extended also to southern India.

## 6. The Place of English in Indian Education

The enormous qualitative and quantitative richness of English literature is not to be disputed. Today it is the most effective instrument for the acquisition of scholarship. As a medium of international communication also it has an uppermost place. Hence English must be taught as a second language. It should be a compulsory subject of study at the school and the college level. If possible, at least a certain number of advanced students should also know German or French or Russian. Too long, our sole medium of contact with the outside world has been English. It is imperative now that as independent citizens we should have facilities for contact with the outside world through other sources also. But English must not be supplanted, it has to be supplemented.

In the teaching of social sciences English should continue to play a significant role. The quantity of literature contained in English is very diverse and developed. It is also possible to obtain ideas of non-English sociologists through translations in English. For those who want specialized competence it will be essential to get to the original sources. At the rather advanced age of fifty Karl Marx learnt Russian to read the writings of Chernyshevsky, the Russian economist and revolutionary. Max Weber learnt Russian to follow the details of the agrarian conditions of Russia after the first Russian Revolution of 1905. We have a very developed tradition of our own in the fields of literature, philosophy, ethics and religion. But we have been rather not very creative in the fields of social and political philosophy. Our social and political writings are characterized by too much of theological constructions. The writings of Western sociologists and political theorists have, on the other

hand, a more scientific orientation. Hence it is advisable in the interests of learned enquiry that the process of the dynamic interchange between eastern and western social ideas should continue. The advancing growth of Hindi will progressively involve the bringing of knowledge hitherto contained in English and other foreign tongues, to our population, in their own language, but for a long time to come, we must be in thorough contact with English social and political literature. In the growth of scientific knowledge, the evolution of powerful ideas is a significant step. The rich and developed structure of ideas of European political science, will be of considerable use to us not only in the organizing and systematizing of the materials at our command but will also foster the sense of intellectual keenness and will suggest new ideas. We have seen that some of the dominant political ideas of the western tradition had a very revolutionary impact on our society. The concepts of liberty, equality, social justice, democracy and socialism have incorporated a dynamic fervor into the texture of our thought. Not only have we begun to view our social, economic and political problems in the light of these Western concepts but big movements have been organized throughout the East to give concrete shape to these notions and ideas. On our tradition-bound static societies these western ideas have had an explosive and revolutionary impact. It is essential that we maintain a thorough contact with western social and political philosophy. Hence English does have a very significant role to play in this field. Hence although more and more of students will henceforward learn social and political philosophy through the Hindi medium, we should develop in them the competence and capacity to consult the original books too. This means that English should continue to be taught as a second language in the colleges. This will have a fertilizing and liberalizing effect on the mind.

During the days of British imperialism our educators and some of our educational authorities were very fastidious about pronunciation. They always stressed correct pronunciation. But I think that the insistence is short-sighted. First of all, there is no standard English pronunciation. The Oxford accent is completely different from the Brooklyn accent in New York.

The pronunciation of English words by Australians is totally different from that of Americans. Hence our attempt in republican India should be to try for only that much correctness in the matter of pronunciation as possible. There is no necessity of feeling diffident about our pronunciation. If a Britisher or an American can pronounce Gandhi as "Ghaindi" and be regarded perfectly respectable, there is no reason for we Indians to be always apologetic about our English pronunciations. I am not advocating flippancy or non-seriousness. I am only stating that approximation to a far-off standard of pronunciation is not the sole criterion of competence in the English language. The necessity of absolute correctness in pronunciation arises when English has to be read as a language of poetry. But the general body of Indian students has to read English prose for getting knowledge and information and for communication. In this case, fidelity to a remote ideal of perfect pronunciation is not so essential.

In teaching foreign languages we cannot be unmindful of cultural differences. The dominant pattern of our culture is different from the pattern of modern western culture which is oriented more towards economics, sociology, science, secularism and ethical relativism. Hence in the selection of prose and poetry texts to be taught to school students we have to see that they do not run counter to our criteria of moral perfection. Our moral values should now be asserted and we should refuse to swallow any and everything. When I was a student in the school, in the eighth class, in our prose book there was a story entitled "The Pot of Basil". It had a rather morally damaging theme but although my father was very hostile to the moral indirectly taught through that story, since that was a prescribed text-book there was no help. But now we are free and should carefully scrutinize the passages and texts that are taught to our student population. The cultural criterion that I am emphasizing can be illustrated also in a different way. In most of the English prose and poetry selections as well as selections from novels, there is a frequent reference to wars that are important from the standpoint of English cultural and social surroundings. Moreover, the vocabulary in our schools and colleges should be

such as we will need for our purposes. We should not waste time over a vocabulary which we will not need generally.

## 7. Conclusion

Language teaching is not merely the technical process of handling words, propositions and sentences. The entire process of imparting linguistic instruction is an artistic whole. The minds and souls of students have to be awakened to appreciate deep and vast vistas of the cultural landscape. Hence language teaching should be a birth into a rich harvest of intellectual splendor. Due to the dominance of scholasticism we have stressed over much the grammatical criterion. Grammar is a subservient agent. The appreciation of the moving and developing rhythm and melody and tempo of language is more important. This necessitates a developed linguistic environment. A language is not merely a formal medium of expression, in a sense, it is the revelation of our soul. Hence it is essential that the child and the student should experience the richness and the deep content of the spoken and the written word. This type of orientation will transform the drudgeries of our language classes and will make them interesting theatres of rich experience.

Language teaching in our country has to be a cooperative enterprise. Not only the formal language teacher but teachers in charge of other subjects also directly and indirectly teach language. Hence proper attention should be paid to this aspect of the matter. Today a dangerous habit is growing that some teachers who have begun teaching through the Hindi medium in colleges experience an unjustified pride in speaking incorrect Hindi. This has a bad effect in the long run and also immediately. Hence it is essential to realize that all teachers are in some sense language teachers. The entire school and the college are linguistic confraternities and adequate language training will imply a total raising up of the whole educational environment and atmosphere.

# 11

## *Culture and Education*

### **I. The Concept of Culture**

(a) *Culture, Aesthetics, Ethics and Religion.* Culture signifies the growth of man's faculties and powers. The essence of culture is the harmonious perfection of a man's being and personality. Man has different latent capacities. He has aesthetic and cognitional propensities. Literature, arts and music are objective representations of the productive powers of his aesthetic faculty. Philosophy and the sciences are the products of man's cognitional powers. The purely cognitional sciences like philosophy, social sciences and the natural sciences do indicate the advances of the human intellect. They are products of analytical subtlety, powers of observation and experimentation and the capacity for theoretical systematization. Each one of these fields is significant for the growth of man. They have deep implications for culture but culture does not include the whole of them. A cultured man should have a taste for philosophy and should understand the general implications of the social and natural sciences but an intricate knowledge of banking, finance and organic chemistry cannot be regarded as an integral component of culture.

Is ethics included in culture ? The answer is both yes and no. Culture does have a dimension of action. If in our action, we act with the consciousness of reverence for man's personality we are acting as cultured men and at the same time our action is ethical. But ethics does not end merely in socially harmonious action. It also comprehends the purification of human intentions. To the extent that ethics culminates in noble actions which have socially harmonious effects, it pertains to the domain of culture but the province of the origin of moral intuitions and the purification of feelings and intentions goes beyond the domain of culture. Hence I think that although

culture comprehends a part of ethics, ethics has a dimension which takes us beyond culture. Culture is a social category and it comprehends the field of moral action, though the province of the purification of our motives goes beyond it.

So far as religion and spirituality are concerned they also are to some extent part of culture. The social and institutional side of religion has a cultural import. The rituals, sacrifices and acts of worship do indicate the different stages of man's advance in the field of culture but religion also has a deeper content. The inner act of subliminal introspection, the revelation of the divine spirit and the processes of the illumination and transfiguration of the human soul are areas of experience which transcend the domain of culture. Hence if I have to define the field of culture I will stress only the aesthetic, cognitional and ethical sides of man. I do not negate the religious and spiritual dimensions of man but they are mostly beyond the domain of culture. If the *sublime* is the field of moral purification, religion and spirituality, the *beautiful* and the action-oriented moral are the field of culture.

Hitherto, there has been a tendency to identify culture with literacy and aesthetic satisfactions and achievements but to eliminate the moral aspect from culture would mean the impoverishment of culture. It is true that the creations in the field of literature, painting, dance and drama indicate the advances of man in the realization of beauty. Sculpture, painting and poetry impart a healing effect to the dejected and tired mind. Culture has thus a deep import for the aesthetic dimension of man. It opens the field of the aesthetic before the human mind and soul. It invests the particular details and facts with the charms that one derives from the perception of the whole. It reveals to us the magic of interconnectedness and organic kinship. Culture, thus, is the realization of the symmetry of the whole. It is an opening into the domain of infinite beauty.

The simultaneous stress on the aesthetical and moral aspects of culture will serve to rid it of a false aristocratic and individualistic bias. Aesthetic enjoyment can be had in privacy and isolation. We can read the *Divine Comedy* and feel elated by its ethereal imagination. Other entities of art can also be enjoyed

in isolation but this aesthetic realization at an emotional and intuitive level does not exhaust the deep meaning of culture. Culture has also an ethical dimension. The man of true culture cannot rest in peace when all around him he finds dust, disease, poverty, squalor and misery. Like Tolstoy, he will feel like renouncing his great novels and other productions in literature and will take up the pilgrim's staff and start on the journey towards collective perfection.

Sometimes, in modern India, we regard Rabindranath Tagore as the embodiment of culture and Mahatma Gandhi as the embodiment of the rigor of moral laws. But Tagore had a burning desire for the redemption of the suffering multitude. Only, he did not like the way of open rebellion against the British. Gandhi did not care much for external beauty but like Socrates he had faith in an infinite beauty. He had achieved an inner poise, restraint, balance and equanimity whose cultivation provides beauty to the soul. Gandhi symbolized perhaps the same quest for perfection as Tagore did. Both were devoted to the ideal of harmony which is the goal of an artist. Both accepted that a religion of humanity represented the advance of human ethical endeavors. Both loved man with a passionate urgency and a deep sincerity. In their great love for the human being not as an abstraction of science and philosophy but as a concrete entity of flesh and blood, Tagore and Gandhi have given expression to the ideal of culture as the perfection of the aesthetic and the ethical dimensions of the human spirit.

Hence in the definition of culture I would stress the general growth and perfection of man's total faculties and powers, with the predominant stress being on the aesthetic and the moral.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> I will thus illustrate the connotation of culture :

Culture =	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(i) Literature (poetry, drama etc.)</li> <li>(ii) Art (architecture, sculpture, painting etc.)</li> <li>(iii) Music</li> <li>(iv) Social Ethics (the problem of ethical motivation is outside culture)</li> <li>(v) Social Religion (Worship, rituals, sacrifice, collective prayers etc. But mystical delight or spiritual contemplation and absorption are outside the province of culture.)</li> </ul>
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It is thus clear that I do not include the total patterns of a man's collective and individual behavior in the province of culture as some of the anthropologists do.

(b) ***Culture and Classicism.*** Sometimes culture is equated with an admiration and reverence for the past. In India the man of wisdom has been traditionally regarded as one who is thoroughly steeped in the knowledge of the old Vedic and Vedantic scriptures and can quote verses from the vast lore of Sanskrit literature. In China a study of Confucian classics has been regarded as the requisite for a gentleman who could be entrusted with responsible governmental jobs.<sup>1</sup> For many centuries the knowledge of Hebrew, Greek and Latin has been the hallmark of a cultured and educated person in the Western civilization. *Alterthumswissenschaft* or the study of the scriptures, history and literature of the past has immense advantages. First of all, it imparts a sense of historical continuity. It provides an insight into the progressive evolution of the dominant trends of society and culture. It thus gives a comprehensiveness and catholicity of outlook. It lifts one up from petty immersion into the details of the present. It shows that the texture of human civilization is bigger than any specific segment of it at any particular time. It teaches that the achievement of worldly success is not enough. There have been vast empires in the past but they have eventually crumbled to dust. Thus a study of the past shows the evanescent and ephemeral character of the biggest splendors. It thereby makes us humble and meek. It cures us of our pride and vanity. A persistent sense of the continuity of the historical stream thus elevates our normal consciousness. It lifts up the veil of egoistic satisfactions and brings us face to face with the gigantic context of universal history. Hence *Alterthumswissenschaft* or the study of the past is an important and integral element in the acquisition of the traits of culture.

The study of the past is significant for culture in another way also. It makes possible our acquaintance with the greatest figures of history. It is not possible to have a direct physical acquaintance with Krishna, Plato and Samkara. But with the

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<sup>1</sup> This refers to the situation before the 1911 Revolution.

help of the *Bhagavadgita*, the *Republic* and the *Brahmasutrabhasyam* we get into intimate touch with the minds of these pre-eminent and lofty figures of humanity. These books record the gems of the experiences of these great and noble souls. A study of the past imparts to us access to the treasury of the rich creations of humanity. When we study the great books of the past we not only stuff our minds with additional loads of information but we undergo a phase of intellectual deliverance and spiritual enlightenment. The noble thoughts of the past evoke similar responses from us, and by the art of successful assimilation become parts of our personality. The process of the study of the past is enlivening for our personality. It is a kind of dynamic and intensive entering into the mental formations of the old writers and in this process of sympathetic apperception new dimensions of the mental and moral processes of man are revealed. In short, the study of the past establishes a spiritual and aesthetic partnership between the old and the new, it helps us to replenish the new by a cleansing and chastening bath into the fertilizing stream of old culture. A contemplation of the calm figure of the compassionate Buddha seated in Nalanda and Bodh Gaya imparts to us a sense of heavenly perfection. It raises us into superior layers of reality. It almost transfuses our personality with the subtle touch of a rejuvenating power. In the Hindu epics—the *Ramayana* and the *Mahabharata*—we see noble ideals of life represented in the persons of Rama, Bhism and Yudhisthira. A study of their lives and characters imparts an extended dimension to our own lives. The past does contain, indeed, deep treasures which can uplift our consciousness, elevate our personality and enrich our emotions. In the literary treasures of old are contained certain important elements of a sane social living. The secret of culture lies in the elevation of our personality and the precious artistic monuments and aesthetic creations of the past do serve to open untrodden vistas of human splendors. Hence classicism is decidedly an essential element in cultural progression.

But classicism has its dangers too. It develops an antiquarian interest for its own sake. We come to worship the fetishes, customs and superstitions of the past. It degenerates into archaism. Thus by becoming pedantic, scholastic and

bookish it becomes an impediment to further progression. The past has momentous significance but this significance has to be interpreted in a prospective teleological way as a catalytic instrument of common good and not in a retrospective fashion. There were great seers, sages, mystics, artists, philosophers and poets in the past but their contributions, notable and precious as they are, do not mark the final point in the advance of the human mind. The universe has diverse phases. Reality is complex, heterogeneous and manifold. No single person, or a group of persons, can claim to have revealed all the aspects and attributes of reality. It is imperative to obtain as perfect a law of the nature of things as possible under the situation of our growing knowledge. Furthermore, each one of us has to develop his own personality. The essence of personality is the realization of our specific individuality. We are living in a complicated world. Through interactions in this intricate structure of social and physical environment, we realize gradually the essence of our character. This constitutes our real self. I may be deeply moved and inspired by the orations of Vivekananda and Ramatirtha but in order to be my own self I have to re-experience the truth of the propositions they have inculcated. The *Symposium* or the *Parmenides* or the *Phaedo* contain the depth of the inward realizations of Plato but by merely acquiring an accurate, expert and exact linguistic and philosophical grasp of Plato's ideas I do not develop my own personality to the maximum. My own realizations must be of an intense and profound character to transform my personality. Not every person can attain the spiritual excellence of Vivekananda or Ramatirtha and the philosophical subtlety and majesty of Plato. But I am stressing a general principle. A scholastic parade of ancient learning does not release me from the obligation to experience and interpret reality in my own way. If culture means the growth of my intuitive, aesthetic, emotional and cognitive personality<sup>1</sup> I have to make Herculean efforts to pen-

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Matthew Arnold's definition of culture as the pursuit of "a harmonious expansion of *all* the powers which make the beauty and worth of human nature."—M. Arnold, *Culture and Anarchy*, p. 48, quoted in W. F. Connell, *The Educational Thought and Influence of Matthew Arnold* (London, Kegan Paul, 1950), p. 162.

trate into the recesses of reality. I am a unique being. The specific collection of the material and vital energy and the particular moulding of the psychological structure which constitutes *me* is absolutely unrepeatable. Hence I have to become conscious of my distinctness. The explicit awareness of individuality is the secret of cultural creativism. It is true that in senses more than one I am the utterance of my situations and environments but the constituent permutations and combinations of the situational complex are distinct in each individual case. Aristotle, Aquinas and Newton had experienced reality in their own ways. I am also experiencing reality in my own specific way. No matter how deeply and urgently I may long for the restoration of the past, the gigantic rush of the historical progression defeats any nostalgic feeling for the recovery of the contents of the past. Even during the period we are contemplating a revival of the old rituals, economics, and poetic and artistic criteria, the world has moved on. Movement is the essence of the social and physical world. Stability and rest are only conceptual abstractions. The propulsion and forward impulsion of energy is incessant. Hence the only thing necessary is to be aware of the distinct specificity of our experiences. We have to analyze freely and rationally the contents of our own experiences. This explicit awareness will give us great confidence, clearness of mind and strength. Slowly we shall realize the grandeur of our own realizations. Genius consists in imparting a universal content to our limited and particular experiences. We have to guard ourselves from being smothered by the cramping weight of antique scholasticism. A humanistic culture consists in being abreast of the forces and currents of the times and in interpreting them for ourselves and the world.

(c) *Culture and Science : Kulturwissenschaft und Naturwissenschaft.* It is true that the natural sciences are concerned with dead matter. They deal with the stars and planets, mass, motion and gravitation, chemical elements and compounds, rock deposits, animal fossils etc. On the other hand, the cultural sciences are supposed to deal with the values, emotions and aspirations of human beings endowed with sentiments. The subject matter of the two is thus different. But nevertheless science and culture have to come together.

The study of sciences does impart culture. First, the growth of science is a function of the quest for pure knowledge. Science enshrines the zest for limitless advance. It liberates our mind from the shackles of ignorance and superstition. It replaces the intellectual coldness and dull incuriosity of the undeveloped human mind by a delightful habit of ever-increasing probe into the nature of things. Secondly, science has increased our control over the forces of nature and has imparted to us material facilities for the cultivation of art and aesthetics. Hence in these two ways science has a cultural dimension. It is ridiculous to regard the poems enshrining the worship of fire, air, thunder etc., in the old scriptures as elements of culture and to dismiss the more accurate analysis of fire, air and thunder as pertaining to a field which may for the purposes of classification be termed "non-culture". Then again, the subjects and disciplines ordinarily regarded as pertaining to the domain of culture do have a scientific character too. Art is regarded as a domain of culture but the element of science is involved there too if in conveying stones found at Chunar to Sanchi there is the application of scientific technology. The development of experimental techniques in psychology has added new dimensions to our knowledge of man. I see no reason to state that Descartes's location of the human soul in the pineal gland is a topic for cultural philosophy while Harvey's concept of the circulation of the human blood belongs to science. It does belong to science but it has a cultural significance in that it makes us more equipped to know our own personality. The study of science reveals to us the complexity, heterogeneity and immensity of the universe. It makes us realize our smallness. Science thus reinforces the ethical attribute of meekness and humility. It challenges our arrogance and aggressiveness. Science thus is a most effective antidote to the despotism of vanity. It makes it incumbent upon us to cultivate an attitude of studentship. Thus science gives to us culture. For purpose of intensive investigation and close scrutiny we may separate the disciplines pertaining to science and culture. Some of us may concentrate on scientific subjects and some may devote our energies to culture. But this is only for the purpose of division of labor. Human life is short and the domain of

knowledge is endless and hence some specific allocation of intellectual pursuits to different groups of people is essential. But that does not imply, in the least, any separation of the subject matter as such. It is essential to realize that the popularization of scientific knowledge is essential for the growth of culture while at the same time for the fullness of scientific life it is essential to have some acquaintance with the achievements in art. Science is inspired by the zeal for collective advance and social progression and its fundamental aim is almost akin to that of religion. Science reinforces culture and culture sweetens science. We may stress the necessity of a *Lebensphilosophie* in opposition to the enormous stress on the study of an objectivistic, mechanistic and impersonalistic science. But in the study of cosmology which has been regarded as one of the significant branches of philosophy we do need the help of science. Hence it should be emphasized that there is no antithesis between science and culture but they represent a division or separation essential because of the requirement of specialization. The catholic spirit of culture serves as a corrective to the violence of the proponderance of scientific and technical specialisms. Hence in a good educational curriculum it is essential to provide for training both in sciences and culture. Herbert Spencer's thesis that the teaching of the classics should be replaced by the teaching of the sciences as maintained in his essay "What knowledge is of Most Worth" is one-sided. It is essential to combine the analytical method of science with the capacity for imaginative reconstruction which is the aim of literary and humanistic studies. Neither do I endorse the suggestion of Plato that from the early years till the age of twenty there should be literary and theological education along with gymnastic and military training, scientific education from the age of twenty to thirty and philosophic education from the age of thirty to thirty-five. I do agree with Plato's principle that a perfect educational curriculum postulates a knowledge of literature, science and philosophy. But the different periods of a man's age into which he specifies the different curricula may suit a few individuals but cannot be practised on a large scale. Hence I think that along with literature an elementary knowledge of science should be

provided before the student passes the high school or matriculation examination. After matriculation there has to be more rigorous specialization. But I propose that even during the four or five years after the high school which will be devoted to a specialized study of the arts, sciences or engineering, it is essential to devote at least one period a week for popular lecture in those fields in which the student is not specializing. Students of physical science do need a general acquaintance with the dominant currents of literature and the social sciences. Similarly the students of the classics do need to have some elementary knowledge of the theory of relativity, quantum mechanics, X-ray, radio engineering etc. The primary aim of education is not to produce a mechanical expert but a man cultivated. True it is that the man has to pursue a vocation but vocationalism is not the only justification of education. Vocation is for the sake of life and is not to be equated with life. Man is not a mere producing machine. Hence the pursuit of a specialized vocation is not to be regarded as the fundamental goal of education.

(d) *Culture and External Behavior.* Sometimes culture is regarded as equivalent to the promotion of refined tastes and good manners. It refers to the cultivation of courtesy and politeness in our talks and conversations. Our movements and actions have to be agreeable and not awkward. In this sense culture is the antithesis of rude speech, vulgarity in manners etc. It incorporates an element of neatness and cleanliness in its content. It connotes restraint of speech as opposed to flamboyant tastes. For being regarded as cultured we have to be polished and refined in our approach to the people to whom we talk. If we inadvertently touch the body of another we are supposed to apologize. In other words for being regarded as cultured it is thought essential that we must not injure the feelings of somebody else.

It is true that for the advancement of culture bluntness and boorishness have to be conquered. Uncouth manners and offensive speech have to be shunned. The mark of a cultured man is elevation and sobriety in place of soppishness and ostentation. Thus culture has a great social significance inasmuch it enables us to better adapt ourselves to the social situation.

It is an ingredient of social adjustment and accommodation.

But there are two reservations that have to be made to this concept of culture as good manners. First, there is a relativistic element in culture. What may be regarded as a component of culture in one country or civilization may be regarded as the height of barbarity in another. Appearing without an upper garment on the streets may be regarded as a sign of the absence of culture in the West but in the tropical climate of India this is regarded as perfectly valid. Some of the greatest saints did not use any upper garment. In the cold climate of the West it may be a sign of culture to eat with spoons and fork. But many Indians would consider the use of spoons which are liable to be used by many people, at different times, to be an example of dirty habit. Shaking hands with women is legitimate in Western social culture but it would be regarded as unscrupulous and indecent in Hindu society. Hence in judging of culture we have to be very careful and cautious. The differences in the values set upon different manners and customs have to be realized. Sometimes groups and individuals migrating to different countries and civilizations have to face great emotional strains in getting adjusted to the cultural patterns of the countries and civilizations to which they migrate. Thomas and Znaniecki have analyzed the emotional and social problems of the Polish peasants who go to America. This differential valuation makes essential that the majority community and the dominant group have to exercise great restraint and caution in demanding conformity from the minority and migrating groups. Since culture is not something rigid and absolute, it makes it essential that as individuals and groups we be more tolerant and generous in our attitude. An extension of liberality on our part will help in the lessening of social tyranny. The old dogmatic attitude of considering what is not our own with an eye of suspicion and hostility and consider that to be inferior is not only a deterrent to the realization of a democratic community but is also unhuman.

A second reservation to the concept of culture as training in good manners is that, at times, it is liable to degenerate into snobbery and magnification of trifles. An external pomp and ostentation may come to be rated very high. A premium is

liable to be set on petty comforts and hypocrisy. Sometimes for purposes of appearing social and adept in the formal cult of decency we may practise hypocrisy and superfluity. The language of politicians and diplomats is often an exercise in the art of double dealing, duplicity and deception. But a humanistic culture believes in a noble serenity of temper and can never sanction snobbish, servility to public opinion and hypocrisy. We do not have to use offensive language but we must maintain fidelity to truth. I can never sanction casualty of truth in the name of culture. Culture means poise, serenity and quiet manners. Pretension is one of the greatest enemies of culture. The art of good conversation is an ingredient of culture but it can never be considered the attribute of a cultivated and cultured man to indulge in trifling subjects only for being regarded as social and informal. Pedantry and sophistication are not to be praised but a cultural breeding must generate a loyalty to truth and honesty. Intellectual and moral integrity must characterize the speech and actions of a cultured person. Amiability and sweet reasonableness are good qualities but they cannot take the place of a fearless pursuit of truth and ethics. One must be ready to abide by the dictates of his conscience. Shall Gandhi cater to the vanities of the so-called cultured opinion by wearing good dress or shall he obey the voice of the inner spirit in using only as much cloth as is available to the lowest person in India ? Hence, occasionally, if in term of a higher fidelity to the demands of truth and morality one breaks the accepted conventions of the day the critics must not show irritability and wrath.

(e) *The Social Elements of Culture.* Culture is the progressive growth into the humanization and liberalization of the human spirit. It wants to enhance the capacity of man for joyful pursuit of some fundamental ideals. It is true that the major portion of a man's attention is given to earning a living. But when men cease to be a prey to the consuming engrossment with the mere mechanical aspects of earning a living and take an interest in the elevation of the mind for its own sake and not merely for the successful pursuit of a career or vocation, they can be regarded as cultured. Thus the ennoblement and refinement of mind and its perfection is the essence of culture.

But mere individual perfection is not enough. The degeneration of individuality into coarse, profane and conceited egoism has to be guarded against. We have also to realize our social responsibility. A kind and considerate interest in the lives of our fellow men should be regarded as a vital element of culture. A mere individualistic approach to culture may lead to an aristocratic attitude of solitude and aloofness and it may even generate a perverse and brutal tendency of contempt for the unenlightened masses. I appreciate an aristocracy of moral and mental perfection but I do not sanction any contemptuous disregard of the feelings and desires of the masses. Hence the smug philistine sense of self-satisfaction with the egoistic interests of one's limited self has to be replaced by an expounded social consciousness. Egotism is the disease and pest of society. The social elements of culture need emphasis not only because ours is the age of fundamental mass democratization and equalitarianism but also because the moral dimensions of culture cannot be realized unless there is an emancipation from the dull routine of a petty egoistic existence. The aesthetic delights and satisfactions that we receive from the pursuit of culture have to be shared to the maximum possible extent with our neighbors. Culture itself is the creation of many minds in intellectual interaction. A cultured mind is a liberated man and the liberation of mind cannot be complete in the limited domain of an egoistic existence. A dynamic contact with the problems of other men brings out latent dimensions of our own being and personality and hence the social dimensions of culture need emphasis.

## **2. Education and Culture**

Education is an instrument of culture. If culture emphasizes the element of aesthetic and moral perfection it is evident that education is a significant technic for the realization of this perfection. Education is an opening. Its essence is the cultivation of a free, disengaged attitude towards things. It releases our powers, it elevates our being and it reveals to us the unfathomed layers of our own soul. Education thus is not only a technic of culture but is an integral part of culture.

Education promotes culture in two ways. First it helps us

to interpret the value of culture. The symbolism of art and poetry is made clear to us in educational institutions. The profound meaning of philosophical texts and poems is clarified through the processes of instruction. It is through a process of education that the student body is taught the meaning and import of culture. The deep significance of cultural values is expressed in terms of concepts and propositions which receive their criticism and interpretation in the different technics employed in education.

Second, education perpetuates cultural values. The values and philosophy of culture are transmitted from generation to generation through education. The rich heritage of the past and the creative growing thought of the present are communicated to the student population through education. The emotional penumbra that surrounds cultural entities is conveyed in subtle fashion from the older to the younger generation through education. The deep distinction between the sacred and the secular, the eternal and the temporal and things related to status and to contract, the refinement of the egoistic and the altruistic and the distinction between the barbaric, the philistine and the cultured are sometimes directly and sometimes indirectly suggested in class rooms. Education thus is a vital instrument in the preservation and perpetuation of culture.

The social dimensions of culture can be learnt through a process of correct education. Education is a corporate enterprise. The coming together and dynamic communication between several minds, young and old, is in itself a cultural process if properly attended to. The class room is a society in miniature. The attitudes of mutual consideration and social regard are cultivated in the institutions for educational work. Thus education is a vital ingredient in that process of the socialization of the individual which is a tremendously important aspect of culture. Democracy postulates the healthy impact of the freed intelligence on social and political problems. The concept of culture in the modern world has to be based on the freeing of the human mind from the shackles of superstition, ignorance and the attachment to irrational creeds and cults. Education has to correct the defects of egoism and a false individuation.

Individuation is a healthy process only when it is integrated with the perspective of social harmony and rational equilibrium. It must have been an epoch-making event in the evolution of our cultural concepts when the principle of the abnegation of the ego for the sake of higher and broader interests and entities was recognized by the social consensus. The transition from the demonic to the divine in man can never be complete without the enshrinement of the social consciousness. A noble spiritual and moral consciousness of the good of others and the congruent orientation of one's conduct is the height of the evolutionary endeavors of man. Education has to play an immensely significant role in this realization of the superior claims and obligations of the society upon man. If we cannot be moved to pity at the sight of misery and suffering all around us it indicates that our education is deficient somewhere. An attitude of aristocratic exclusiveness is not the sign of cultured humanity. The mark of educational enlightenment is not merely the aesthetic appreciation of art and beauty but also the cultivation of the kind and generous heart and soul.

### **3. Education and Cultural Change**

Culture is a collective entity. It represents the result of cumulative growth. It has a pronounced social orientation. Individuals by their genius do contribute elements to culture but as a social continuing reality, culture has an organic shape and nature.

Culture as a dynamic social entity is subject to two processes of change. First, there are external impacts on culture. The influences of Islam and Christianity on Hindu thought and social manners have been significant. Islamic culture in India has incorporated some significant elements from Hinduism. Buddhism originated in India but it has left its deep influences on the society and culture of China and Japan. The influence of Hellenism on the Roman culture was tremendous. These represent the examples of external impact on cultures. Secondly, there are examples of inner transformations in cultures. Even if we may not accept the conception of a biological necessitarian law of origination, maturation and extinction of cultures as organic phenomena, still like all things that have a history

in space and time, culture is subject to changes and becomings. These inner dialectics of cultural change are manifested in changes of styles of linguistic usage, changes in art motifs and changes in valuations. The transformation of the emphasis on nature worship of the Vedas into the sacrificial liturgy of the period of the Brahmanas is an example of cultural change because of immanent factors. The transition from the polytheism and ritualism of the period of the Brahmanas to the monotheism and monism of the Upanishads is also an example of cultural change occasioned by immanent factors. On the other hand, in the evolution of the Gandhara art and the Mahayana religion the influence of the Bactrian Greeks and other foreign hordes in India like the Parthians, the Kushanas, the Sythians and the Yuechis etc. is significant. Thus cultural change is a function of both external factors and inherent immanent processes.

Education is an agency of cultural change.<sup>1</sup> The English education in India for nearly a century and a quarter has been one of the most powerful factors for changes in values and culture. The changed cultural values have been responsible not only for the rise of political nationalism in this country but have been at the back of the demand for diverse kinds of social legislation. It is in the context of the changes brought about in the minds of the Indian intelligentsia that we can understand the passing of the Hindu Code Bill. The customs that were once regarded as deeply sacrosanct have been subjected to corrosive challenges due to the infiltration of the equalitarian, radical and dynamic ideas of the West. Not only in India but throughout the entire East the virile and dynamic impact of Western ideas broadcast and spread by the growth of the European, especially British, American and French systems of education has been immense. The harvest has not been gathered. The entire East is in a ferment due to the impact of the ideas of Mazzini, Rousseau and Marx and Lenin which have been disseminated in the educational institutions of the day.

Education, thus, is a promoter of social and cultural changes.

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<sup>1</sup> F. Clarke, *Education and Social Change* (Sheldon Press, 1940).

The almost revolutionary social and cultural changes brought about in Turkey were sought to be reinforced by the introduction of a curriculum which would prepare a mind oriented towards them. It is impossible to foster cultural change by perpetuating a system of education which is opposed to the principles of cultural change. For example, the system of education imparted in the Sanskrit *pathsalas* and *tols* cannot be the proper educational agency for creating genuine enthusiasm for a rapidly expansive and planned economy. If British imperialism needed Eton to man it, it is absolutely necessary to have an educational system in India which is oriented to support the vital ideals of economic and cultural transformation. Ours has so far been an agrarian and conservative society. It is being subjected to the impact of the new philosophies of social telesis, collective amelioration and social justice and welfare. The British rule in India was mainly interested in the use of the resources of the country for profit to British investors. It regarded India as an additional grandeur for the imperialistic ego of the British population. Hence it did not promote any significant cultural change. Now the country is ours and the common good of the nation as a whole is the prime category in our social philosophy. But it is possible that there may set in an anarchical trend towards barbarization and vulgarization of the social ethics because of the artificially accelerated tempo of change as a consequence of the anxious eagerness and impatience of some sections for too rapid a westernization of this ancient land. Hence it is essential that the educational institutions play a role in the interpretation and criticism of the currents and cross-currents of our social life. Education can be a great help in the solution of the dominant cultural crisis of our time since its aim is the perfection of our faculties. Mass education has an enormously responsible part to play. Education is not the mere accumulation of the heritage of the past or the mere collection of information, but it is inspired with a functional teleology. It has to correct the mechanical weight of dead conservatism and outworn inertia. Hence it has to be used as an instrument of social and cultural change and progress. It cannot remain neutral today. We cannot be content merely with regarding education as the

adornment of the man of specialized competence. It is also a sociological category. As responsible citizens, educationists have to come forward to guide the processes of cultural change by releasing a stream of fresh critical and original thought which can stimulate and inspire our social workers.

#### 4. Conclusion

Education is mainly a technic while culture is a value. Education has mainly been regarded as a means, sometimes for salvation, sometimes for personal ennoblement and perfection, and sometimes for creative participant citizenship. Culture, on the other hand, is a value. It is a good in its own right. Hence it can be said that education is the process of the creation, perpetuation and enhancement of cultural values.

While education is a technic and means for culture, not the whole of education can be regarded as a means to culture. That part of education whose main aim is the utilitarian pursuit of a vocation cannot be regarded as a part of culture. The essence of culture is the liberation of the mind for its own sake. Hence I would exclude technical education, vocational education and in-service training for engineering from the category of culture. I do not negate the immense value and significance of technical and professional education. I simply would not comprehend them under culture. Literary and moral education and education in the arts constitute real technics for the realization of cultural values.

## *Democracy and Education*

### **I. Meaning and Purpose of Education**

As a significant aid to the mental development and culture of mankind education is a vital social force.<sup>1</sup> The transition from the stages of savagery and barbarism to civilization has been fostered by the growth of educational processes. The aim of education in the ancient Hellenic civilizations was conceived to be socialization. It defined the patterns of behavior of people. It specified the norms according to which they were to orient their external action. In a nomadic stage man is the victim of chance, contingency and sporadic spontaneous intuition. He behaves as he likes and the only restraint on his behavior is the fear of superior coercion. But the growth of social and communal life implies that some basic patterns and criteria are being evolved and specified according to which a man should act. Hence education signifies the transcendence of egocentric and selfish actions by socially-oriented action. The Greeks hinted at this process in their concept of *paideia*. *Paideia* signifies the growth of culture.<sup>2</sup> It refers to a systematic process of training and intellectual development. Education, in this perspective, means, not the amassing and accumulation of bookish information but a general cultural and moral advance. It, as equivalent to socialization and cultural growth, was the ideal sought after in ancient Hellas, in Confucian China and in the Anglo-Saxon traditions of the "cultivated gentleman". It implies that a man has to get over crudeness and vulgarity and develop refined

<sup>1</sup> C. D. Burus, "Education for Democracy", Ch. IX in *Democracy*, pp. 170-84.

<sup>2</sup> Werner Jaeger, *Paideia*, 2 vols.; E. Cassirer, *The Myth of the State*, p. 62.

aesthetic, intellectual and moral sensibilities.<sup>1</sup> It is this aspect of the characteristics of the cultivated gentlemen that we have in mind when we refer to "liberal education".<sup>2</sup>

But there is another aspect also of education. It refers to education as the art and process of manipulating and controlling the forces of nature and society. It signifies the attainment of those technics and formulas by which we can manage our affairs of life. Hence education becomes scientific, technical and specialized.<sup>3</sup> In ancient and medieval societies there were simple devices through which these elementary technics, crafts and formulas were transmitted. But with the growth of physical science, industrial and technical education has assumed a very significant role in the advanced countries of the Occident. The growth of political nationalism has led to the extension of the power of the nation-state in politics, administration, military matters and in economic organization. Hence we find large-scale bureaucratization which is based on a vast army of employees who know their special tasks. Thus education as technical specialization leads to the growth of professional ethics. It stresses the devotion and conformity to a code and creed of special training and action best suited to the performance of that particular and specific task. Professional jealousy, competition with other related professions and a sense of personal dignity derived from the holding of particular offices, are the socio-psychological features of this notion of education for training the specialist and professional. We thus see that there are two conceptions of education : (i) education for liberal culture, socialization and cultivation of mind and feelings, and (ii) education as technical competence and manipulative excellence. Aristotle thought that education should be useful and

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Herman H. Horne, *The Democratic Philosophy of Education* (New York, Macmillan, 1933) and *Idealism in Education* (New York, Macmillan, 1910).

<sup>2</sup> There is the rising ascendancy of neo-Thomism and other tradition of humanism in several of great American institutions.

<sup>3</sup> Max Weber : *Essays in Sociology*, pp. 74, 102, 149, 426-34. Weber attempts an admirable analysis of the sociology of Chinese education. See also Talcott Parsons : *The Social System*, pp. 56-57 and 236-242.

necessary in life, should foster virtue and should lead to advance in higher knowledge. He also says : "There can be no doubt that children should be taught those useful things which are really necessary, but not all useful things ; for occupations are divided into liberal and illiberal ; and to young children should be imparted only those kinds of knowledge as will be useful to them without vulgarizing them. And any occupation, art, or science, which makes the body or soul or mind of the freeman less fit for the practice or exercise of virtue, is vulgar ; wherefore we call those arts vulgar which tend to deform the body and likewise all paid employments, for they absorb and degrade the mind."<sup>1</sup>

But although the cultured and cultivated man was the dominant ideal of the ancient and medieval world, and the technical specialist is the ideal of the modern scientific and bureaucratic civilizations, there has sometimes been advanced a view that education should lead to the growth of cosmic and transcendental knowledge. In the ancient Vedanta we have the two concepts—*vidya* and *avidya*. *Avidya* refers to action, to ritualism and to an acquaintance with those secularistic and materialistic branches of learning which enable a man to know the multiplicity of the world. *Vidya* refers to the knowledge of the one primal spiritual reality. According to the Vedanta *avidya* and *apara vidya* enable man to conquer nature, death and weakness while *para vidya* leads to the attainment of spiritual bliss and self-contemplative delight.<sup>2</sup> Plato said that while scientific understanding enabled the guardians to know the separate mathematical, physical and astronomical science, the philosophic conceptual apprehension of the Idea of the Good which could be obtained only by reason, which is superior to understanding, could give a real knowledge of the highest being and reality by indicating the dialectical inter-relationships of the ideas. He felt that only the highest educational achievement—philosophical gnosis—attained by rulers would solve the

<sup>1</sup> Aristotle, *Politics*, 1337b, 3-10.

<sup>2</sup> For the discussions of *Vidya* and *Avidya* see Samkara's commentary on the *Isha Upanishad* and the *Brahmasutras* ; Dayananda's commentary on the fortieth chapter of the *Tajurveda* and Sri Aurobindo, *The Life Divine*, *passim*.

social and political problems of the *polis*. Hegel also postulated a rational purpose of education. He says : "The final purpose of education, therefore, is liberation and the struggle for a higher liberation still ; education is the absolute transition from an ethical substantiality which is immediate and natural to the one which is intellectual and so both infinitely subjective and lofty enough to have attained universality of form."<sup>1</sup> The attainment of philosophical universality, or a dialectical comprehension of the Idea of the Good or a mystical absorption into the delight and raptures of a spiritual being, refers to individual development and perfection. But when we discuss the relationship between politics and education we have to examine the socio-logical and the generalized aspects of the problem. To sum up, we can say that in terms of historical growth and theoretical formulation education has set for itself these three objectives : (i) social and moral culture, (ii) specialized training, and (iii) rational and spiritual growth.

## **2. Democracy and Education**

Democracy is a process of collective political and social advancement. It repudiates the divine right of the kings and the aristocratic right of political rulership of the monied and intellectual *elite*. It accepts the natural right of man ; natural not in the sense of a pre-social and pre-governmental inalienable right but natural in the sense that it is essential to the realization of man's "nature" and being as a rational and moral agent. It postulates the ideal equality of human beings but since there are marked natural and intellectual inequalities among human beings, democracy accepts that only by a process of education can mankind be made aware of their fundamental equality of essence—equality by virtue of an equal sharing in the reality of the spiritual being. In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries democracy was interpreted as the rule of the people. Historical experience, however, has shown that the conception of the sovereignty of the people can only be an ideal and not a reality. But even if we accept democracy to be a political mechanism

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<sup>1</sup> G. W. F. Hegel, *Philosophy of Right* (Oxford ed.), p. 195 ; also pp. 260-61 and p. 117.

which enables a man to express his opinions at stated intervals, on broad general policies, as they are presented to him by organized parties and their leaders, we shall have to strengthen the educational foundations of this democratic form.

Democracy accepts that the people best know their own problems and conferring political power on them would lead to the growth of popular awareness of the problems. Unless there is a social consciousness about the problems, the solutions to them cannot be found. Mere external observation from a distance will not reveal the depths of the social and economic enormities that are creating havoc for the vast millions. But if the people have this democratic franchise, it can help at least to some extent. Democratic consciousness of popular right and the means to get these rights enforced, requires a generalization of education at least up to the high school standard. Mere literacy should not be the democratic objective but we have to aim at least at the achievement, by the people, of some familiarity with the significant political, social and economic problems. The people may not understand the intricacies of international credit mechanism and financial speculations but they should be able to distinguish between the political programs of Khruschev, Tito, Macmillan, Atlee and Kennedy. They should have some knowledge of the fundamental trends of world politics and economics, so that they may point out the hollowness of a demagogue who raises the slogans of foreign dangers in order to sidetrack attention from urgent domestic problems. There was truth in the saying, "We must educate our masters." The people are to be educated so that they may get an awareness of their rights, and may make their demands articulate and coherent and presentable to the press, the assembly, the platform and to the other media of mass communication. They are not to be a passive rabble—a phenomenon which leads to the invention of the cruel phrase "uncultured and unregenerated masses"—but should gradually develop their political personality. Aristotle says something significant : "The Lacedaemonian constitution, for example, is often described as a democracy. In the first place the youth receive a democratic education. For the sons of the poor are brought up with the sons of the rich, who are educated in such a manner as to make it

possible for the sons of the poor to be educated like them. A similar equality prevails in the following period of life, and when the citizens are grown up to manhood the same rule is observed, there is no distinction between the rich and poor. In like manner they all have the same food at their public tables, and the rich wear only such clothing as any poor man can afford."<sup>1</sup> It is clear that democracy requires that all sentiments of racial or class or colour superiority which have often been propagated in history by the apologists of the ruling group should be replaced by the conception of innate equality of man. Difference in actual accomplishment does not indicate racial superiority or inferiority. Autocracy, theocracy and totalitarianism flourish on the imposition or dictation of their commands but democracy is a process of awakening people into the capacity of making fundamental choices and hence it accepts the cult of universal education. In India we have seen the baneful consequences of the monopolization of all education by Brahmanical group. A generalized spreading of the notion of absolute human equality as advocated by modern science, sociology and political philosophy is required as an antidote to the notion of the divine creation of the fourfold social stratification (*chaturvarna*) which has been used for the purpose of social suppression and exploitation. At times the grossest inequalities have been perpetrated in the name of religion and people have tolerated them as part of a divine dispensation. A demand for immediate social justice has been replaced, by religious protagonists, by longings for redemption in future birth. We are not concerned with the metaphysical and theological validity of such gospels but to the extent that they have disastrous social and political consequences, democracy will need to challenge them by making available to people, sounder programs of social living and equal harmonious treatment.

Ignorance has been one of the greatest curses in history. In the name of misconceived truth men have been sacrificed to appease a malignant ghost ; thousands have been butchered in cold blood in the name of religious wars ; rigorous asceticism has been practised to please the sun-god and the moon-god and

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<sup>1</sup> Aristotle, *Politics*, 1294b, 17-27.

interested demagogues have divided people by sentimental appeals to traditional religious pieties. Only a sound system of education can make people stand erect and straight and make them look defiantly into the eyes of the oppressor. Hence democracy is committed to the program of universal secondary education, as no other government which treats man as a means and not as an end, can ever be. It has been said that mere formal and legal guarantees incorporated into constitutions are no bars against actual inequality and injustice. What is needed is eternal vigilance and constant steadiness and application to the cause of democratic liberty. Hence Rousseau said with reference to democracy, "It may be added that there is no government.....which demands more vigilance and courage for its maintenance as it is. Under such a constitution above all, the citizen should arm himself with strength and constancy, and say, every day of his life, what a virtuous Count Palatine said in the Diet of Poland : *Malo periculosam libertatum quam quietum servitium* (I prefer liberty with danger to peace with slavery)."<sup>1</sup>

Education being so important, it is increasingly becoming essential that every citizen, if he is to contribute his trained, articulated and instructed judgment to the political processes, should be educated. It is not contended here that every citizen should become a doctor of science or philosophy. But two implications are immensely significant. All citizens should be given free and compulsory education at least up to the age of twelve. No body should remain illiterate. A minimum amount of liberal education is immensely important even for the craftsman and the technician. Hence the first point to be stressed is a universal program of *general education*. The second significant problem is that no talent should be denied the highest access in the path of its integral fulfilment. In other words, opportunities of wealth and facilities of teaching should not operate as differentiating factors in favor of some students. The twentieth century has seen the destruction of the old ghosts of intellectual superiority of the monied and official classes. It is hoped that undreamt of latent potentialities of the people can be made socially available if opportunities are

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<sup>1</sup> Rousseau, *The Social Contract* (Everyman ed.), p. 56.

given. The careers of Robeson, Ralph Bunche, Carver, Booker T. Washington, Raidas and Ambedkar should provide the final answer to the still belated champions of racial arrogance and caste superiority. Hence in the interests of humanity, a democratic government must guarantee the right to education at least upto the secondary level to all citizens and all facilities have to be provided to talented students to go to the highest reaches in the university scale. In this connexion, Article 121 of the Soviet Constitution marks a significant step onwards. "Citizens of the U.S.S.R. have the right to education. This right is ensured by universal, compulsory, elementary education ; by the fact that education, including higher (university) education, is free of charge ; by the system of state scholarships for the overwhelming majority of students in the higher schools, by instruction in schools being conducted in the native language, and by the organization of free vocational, technical and agronomic training for the toilers in the factories, state farm, machine tractor stations and collective farms."<sup>1</sup>

### **3. Democracy and Educational Freedom**

A democratic philosophy of politics necessarily postulates a general atmosphere of intellectual freedom. Education has to be so organized as to lead to intellectual awareness and not amount to formal indoctrination and propaganda. There are two approaches to education. The one emphasizes inculcation and transmission of doctrines. According to this school either the leaders or the scriptures have the sole possession of truth and the only job for followers and the masses is to accept these teachings and to conform to them. Education means then, transmission of this true and sacred knowledge to the multitude. All religious and mystical disciplines that accept divine revelation of truth are committed to this educational philosophy. The political practice of German fascism also accepted this view.<sup>2</sup> But there is the second approach to education. It conceives of education as a process of constant creative growth. Knowledge is not a body of eternally revealed propositions but is a function

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<sup>1</sup> For Soviet education, see John Somerville, *Soviet Philosophy*, pp. 34-57.

<sup>2</sup> See F. Neumann, *Behemoth*, *passim*.

of ceaseless quest of truth. Hence there is nothing like absolute or final knowledge which is possessed by a religious group or by a party or is contained either in the *Vedas* or the *Koran* or *Das Kapital*. Knowledge has to be acquired and has to be constantly tested and verified with reference to fresh observation, experimentation and research. A democratic approach to education would never sponsor an authoritarian and mechanical transmission of knowledge. It would stress the creation of values by intellectual reciprocity. Such a tolerant reciprocity would plead for a synthesis of apparently opposed ideologies and would abhor the violent suppression of ideas. Democracy accepts the creative approach to education. It rejects the first approach which we may call the finalistic or deterministic approach. Because democracy is committed to the creative approach, it stands for an all-round freedom of the mind and is opposed to the attempts at totalitarian censorship. Plato advocated a censorship of all literature which contained obscure and vulgar incidents in the lives of gods and heroes. Some modern writers have called Plato to be a champion of the closed society who wanted to arrest the course of progress. But they are mistaken. Plato's advocacy of censorship is not based on the criterion of allowing in the state only that type of ideological literature which supports the established regime. He is justified to the extent that no sane government and no conscious society will allow its children to be fed on false and morally damaging stories in the days of their impressionable growth. I accept that there should be strict censorship of the books that are to be put into the hands of children.

But I am opposed to censorship for adults. The Metternich System in Austria attempted to check the growth of democratic and nationalistic ideas by banning subversive literatures and it failed. The attempts of Czarist reaction to check the growth of socialism and communism by banning proletarian and revolutionary literature also failed. The British Government in India also imposed a ban on revolutionary books. But all these attempts have failed. There are usually put forward three grounds for censorship. Sometimes censorship is practised on religious grounds. It is said that nothing against the Bible or the *Koran* or the claims of the Pope should be allowed. But

the advance of science and rationalism makes the religious grounds for censorship quite meaningless. The second ground for censorship is ethical. On grounds of sanctity of morals, sometimes books which deal with problems of marriage and sex on scientific lines are suppressed. But I see no reason why Bertrand Russell (as the author of *Marriage and Morals*) should be refused permission to teach in the City College of New York at a time when Broadway and the Times Square try to corrupt social morals by permitting erotic symbols and pictures to be used by the film industry. I fail to see how social morals will suffer less by ball-room dances and more by studies of Freudianism. A healthy moral society should aim at the development of strong persons who know what to accept and what to reject so far as their reading material is concerned. Oftentimes the directors of censorship are untrained clerks and it is no use investing them with supreme powers to dictate the choice of books for a democratic public. The third ground for censorship is political.<sup>1</sup> It is stated that constitutional and legal opposition is sane and sound but no literature advocating the overthrow of the established regime should be allowed. There are two counter-arguments, however, for resisting censorship of political literature on this score. First, the failures of Metternich and the Czars show that censorship does not succeed in the final course of history. Secondly, it is always a matter of degree as to where constitutional agitation ends and subversive propaganda begins. Its determination depends on the security and the self-confidence of a political system. But historical experience shows that when a political system resorts to censorship and suppression of unwanted literature it is motivated more by the ideological interest of safeguarding the interests of the ruling class than by a disinterested desire to maintain law, order and peace. It is unwise to be guided by hysteria in judging what is subversive and what is not. A political system should believe that if it is managed in the common interest, it is immune

<sup>1</sup> On the general problem of the relationship between education and democracy, see H. J. Laski, *Liberty in the Modern State ; A Grammar of Politics* ; and R. M. MacIver, *The Web of Government*. Also consult Sri Aurobindo, *The Human Cycle* and *The Ideal of Human Unity*.

against subversive attack. Only where there are weak and diseased areas in the body politic, there are chances of subversive propaganda taking root. If those weak spots are there, they will invite subversive ideology, regardless of how cautious the regime is to check the growth of subversive propaganda. The best means to check subversive ideology is to plan a satisfied society. But supposing that a majority of the people feel that a particular minority wants to prepare a *coup d'etat* and is resorting to subversive propaganda for that eventual preparation, is the former justified in employing censorship and in preventing all radical prophets from expressing their views ? To this I will reply that unless they incite people to engage in armed and insurrectionary activities, radicals should not be prevented in freely expressing themselves. Hence my conclusion is that what is to be prevented is not advocacy of a particular sociology or philosophy but the inducement to violent action. I am saying this in the framework of an established constitutional regime. I realize that when matters assume grave seriousness the logic of the immediate situation and not abstract formulas of political ethics dominate the scene and several times in course of social and political revolutions we are faced with the legitimacy of the factual. As a general norm of democratic action, we can only say that what should be prevented is violent action and not radical and revolutionary thinking.

Sometimes it is said that although a fosterer of general and popular education, democracy is opposed to higher culture and advancement of learning. But although in general talks the masses may be hostile to subtle metaphysics, the practices of England, France and the U.S.A. show that democracy is not opposed to advanced training and research.<sup>1</sup> The educational philosophy of western universities is based on the synthesis of the Greek concepts of *paideia* and virtue, the Christian and moral individualism of St. Augustine, Luther and Kant and the

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<sup>1</sup> For a sociological approach to this problem, see Karl Mannheim, *Freedom, Power and Democratic Planning* (Oxford, 1950); Carr-Saunders, "The Function of Universities in the Modern World", *The Sociological Review*, 1940; R. M. Hutchins, *The Higher Learning in America* (New Haven, 1936); Adolph Lowe, *Universities in Transformation*.

scientific gospel of a progressive conquest of nature and socio-economic forces and resources. Democratic educational practice, at least so far as I can say from my own experiences at the Columbia and Chicago universities, accepts the notion that knowledge is a dynamic resultant of intellectual cooperation and interaction. There is a sincere and genuine quest in democracies for truth and there is nothing to substantiate the aristocratic charge that democracy is opposed to higher culture and advanced research. But it is to be emphasized that even in North America the opportunities for advanced competence and training are still generally limited to the richer section only, although the practice of dignity of labour in the U.S.A. certainly enables some adventurous youth to rise to the top. If democratic political philosophy is to become a realized actuality, the extension of advanced university training to those who are capable has to be furnished.

#### **4. Democracy in Educational Institutions**

Modern society is not composed of atomistic individuals. It is a society of societies and a community of communities. Since the Industrial Revolution vast numbers of economic association of the producers, of the labourers and of the consumers have come to the front. Society now is composed of a network of associations like the family, the Church, the university, the trade union and so on. These intermediate associations provide the social cohesiveness and organizing focus to the personality of man. Hence it is contended that if democracy is to succeed in political affairs, there should be the extension of democratic practices and feature in the management of the affairs of the associations also. Apparently it sounds a meaningful and plausible proposition. But it is not possible to make an unequivocal statement in this connexion. I would like to make reservations especially with regard to religious associations because the criterion of deference and respect in a Church may be based on moral excellence and religious merit and not on the art of catching votes. Sometimes it is also said that a commitment to political democracy demands the extensions of democracy also in the university. That means the growth of university autonomy implying the abolition and

elimination of governmental control and management. It also implies, at times, the incorporation of student opinion in the control of the university and the school. So far as the complete elimination of governmental control is concerned, it is a doubtful proposition. Those who contribute to finance the university are bound to assume control. In the U.S.A. the federal government does not control the large private universities but, instead, the board of trustees composed of great capitalist magnets wields great influence.<sup>1</sup> In America we also find the undemocratic practice of vesting large powers in the hands of the university presidents.<sup>2</sup> It is essential that the teaching at the university level should be free from the undesirable influence of ruling political groups but the government as the agent of society has the responsibility to see that temporary passions and fluctuating party caucuses inside the university do not destroy the growth of objectivity, responsibility and neutrality in the conditions of employment and promotion of the teaching staff. It is very possible that in the name of the protection of autonomy from governmental interference, the affairs of a university may fall under the control of self-seeking egoistic individuals, who may transform the temple of learning into a fortress for group fight, personal exaltations and reckless pursuit of power. Hence just as with reference to other associations, the government of the democratic state has assumed certain functions of pronouncing and imposing final and authoritative adjustment in cases of conflict, so also the government should do with reference to the university. So far as the problem of internal democratic practices in the universities are concerned, there should be premium on merit and excellence and not on the manipulation of votes. It is in consonance with the democratic spirit that the sober thinker, the accurate scholar and the sincere teacher

<sup>1</sup> Cf. "The unbroken continuity of objectives of education at all the levels makes it highly desirable for the state to vest in a single state department of education whatever jurisdiction the state should exercise over all education from the nursery to the university." (*Higher Education for American Democracy*, Vol. III, p. 71-74, Report of the President's Commission on Higher Education).

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Harold Laski, *The American Democracy*.

should have an important voice in the university. So far as the representation of student opinion is concerned, I am opposed to students having any say in the management and control of the university, although in the affairs of their own unions and societies they can be granted an amount of autonomy consistent with the maintenance of good sense, order and discipline. In general, my conclusion is that a partial extension of democratic practice and opportunities in educational institutions will lead to the formation of the democratic personality and character. But there should be no laxity, indiscipline and chaos in the name of democracy. Democracy, as Aristotle well said, means habituation both in the arts of ruling and in that of being ruled. Democracy needs a process of training and discipline. Hence the solution is to have democracy in the government, and just as with reference to the civil service and the judiciary there have been evolved objective criteria of recruitment, similarly with regard to the university personnel, the society and government should see that excellence, expertness, specialization and character are the criteria of recruitment and promotion.

### **5. Spiritual Traditions of Indian Education**

In the perspective of Indian democracy it is wise to emphasize once more the spiritual and moral traditions of our country. Most of our political leaders are busy in imitating the West. It is true that the western traditions of secularism have been an advisable antidote to the practices of established churches. Secularism is good to the extent that it enshrines the separation of the church and the state and to this extent it makes the appearance of a theocracy impossible. But in the name of secularism it will be wrong to destroy the spiritual and moral traditions of this country. It is not proper to eliminate the teachings of the *Bhagavadgita* and the *Dhammapada* from the schools for appeasing some particular minority. If our boys lose contact with the traditions of our country we shall cease to have the succession of teachers like Buddha, Samkara, Vivekananda and Gandhi. Sometimes it is said that these spiritual teachings should be imparted in the home and by society but not in government-financed schools. I fail to see the logic

behind it. I am not advocating any theological and dogmatic inculcation. I am advocating the revival and incorporation of our moral and spiritual traditions and I think that the *Bhagavadgita* and the *Dhammapada* and some of the inspired heroic tales of the *Mahabharata* and the *Ramayana* are suitable for the purpose. The Indian word for an academic institution is *ashrama*. It is supposed to encourage the practice of the art of collective moral living and we cannot hope to maintain the requisite moral and spiritual atmosphere in society if we have no place for that in hostels and schools and colleges. I believe that the Indian traditions of holy student life—*Brahmacharya*—as asserted once more in modern India by teachers like Dayananda, Vivekananda, Gandhi and Aurobindo, will go a long way to strengthen our infant democratic republic.

## 6. Conclusion and Suggestions

Although one of the most ancient of historical civilizations, India is a new entrant in the comity of democratic nations. We have to build both qualitatively and quantitatively. The quantitative process is easy. Intensive programs of mass literacy, adult education and free compulsory education in the first stage up to the elementary level and later to the secondary level, will serve our purpose. The qualitative increase of our educational standards and opportunities will take time and also consume a large amount of the tax-payers' money. Democracy in the social and political processes does never amount to a lowering of intellectual standards.<sup>1</sup> For over fifty years and more we are having facilities for university and college teaching. But our achievement in the realm of original contributions to the advance of knowledge has been meagre. Hence we have to be more strict on our academic requirements. No one should be appointed a university lecturer without a doctor's degree. No one should be awarded a doctor's degree unless he has full competence in either French or German. English should continue to be studied as the second language for consi-

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<sup>1</sup> F. B. Millet, *The Rebirth of Liberal Education* (New York, 1945); Adolph Lowe, *University in Transformation* (London, 1940); Arnold S. Nash, *The University and the Modern World* (London, 1945).

derable number of years. No one should be made a university professor on the mere basis of seniority. Merit, indicated by independent investigations in the field of specialized research, has to be the sole criterion of promotion and scholars of repute should be the judges of a scholar's merit. Nationalism and equality are good things but if we want that our universities should also produce people like Kant, Hegel, Marx, and Einstein, we have to replace the obtuseness and hard-headlessnesses of contemporary rulers by minds which are plastic and more humble and more amenable to the recognition of merit.<sup>1</sup> The practice of half-scholarship which prides on acquiring the name of a "good teacher" by dictating notes of text-books in M.A. classes should be replaced by inspired speeches and orations which can enkindle among students a genuine desire to learn. In a democratic set up class-discussions have to be encouraged but that requires sufficient preparation from beforehand. A student community used to learning by rote dictated class-notes at the time of examinations cannot contribute effectively to the work of class discussions. In all sectors of higher learning premium has to be put on pure research as well as research on problems referring to the raging questions in this country. A democratic set up also requires that in evening lectures and extension courses or in summer sessions citizens should be given an opportunity to come in contact with popularized versions of higher knowledge. The building up of a powerful and creative tradition of scholarship requires hard work, self-abnegation and a persistent devotion to the cause

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<sup>1</sup> In a speech on "Life at Western Universities", organized by the Saturday Club at the Theosophical Hall, Patna, on November 18, 1951, I (the author) pointed out four idealistic factors behind the staggering eminence of Western Universities :

- (i) The Greek emphasis on the acquisition of virtue,
- (ii) Christian moral individualism, emphasizing that each individual has something worthwhile to contribute,
- (iii) Scientific empiricism which is oriented to the realization of the significance of practice, experiment and action, and
- (iv) Western idealistic philosophy which emphasizes the creative role of the mind in the genesis of knowledge.

of learning.<sup>1</sup> We have to increase the standard and quality of advanced teaching and research and simultaneously generalize and popularize knowledge. This process of both quantitative and qualitative advance is imperative if we want to securely establish the educational foundations of our democratic republic.

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<sup>1</sup> Karl Jaspers, *Die Idee der Universität* (Berlin, 1925) and *Vom lebendigen Geist der Universität* (Heidelberg, 1946); J. Ortega Y. Gasset, *The Mission of University* (E. T. with an introduction by H. L. Nostrand, Princeton, 1944).

## *Discipline and Peace*

The problem of freedom versus discipline has been present since the beginnings of organized social life. No social existence is possible if the individual chooses to exercise and indulge his contingent fancies, chance emotions, subjective passions and arbitrary desires. For the continued maintenance and progress of the social structure, it is essential to subject the arbitrariness of the individual to regulation and discipline. Freedom does not consist in the absence of discipline and order. Freedom is realized through the voluntary, willing and joyous cooperation in the realization of the values and ideals of a group or social existence. There can be freedom only if the individual emancipates his creative faculties by thoroughly developing them and utilizes them for serving the social good. Not in arrogantly asserting ourselves alone against the society but in enhancing the common good is there genuine freedom.

The problem of discipline is to be studied at all levels.<sup>1</sup> Discipline means the integration of energies for realization of the objectives aimed at. The success of a family organization requires discipline. It is not possible to run a family if the various members insist on asserting their own rights and are prepared to battle for them. There can be no progress in schools, colleges and universities if the various units leagued together do not adjust their demands and obligations in a harmonious fashion. No army can win a battle if it is undisciplined and does not accept the orders of the superior. There can be no peace if the ways of doing things are not properly adhered to, whatsoever be the sector of existence.

The metaphysics of human nature is an old and constant

<sup>1</sup> W. C. Bagley, *School Discipline* (1914); A. C. Perry, *Discipline as a School Problem* (1915); W. H. S. Jones, *Discipline* (Cambridge, 1926); P. E. Harris, *Changing Conceptions of School Discipline*; M. Jutta, *School Discipline and Character*.

theme for moralists and psychologists. It is not possible to state categorically with Bentham that man is a creature looking for the maximization of comforts and advantages. Nor does it seem possible to state categorically with Rousseau and Gandhi that man is essentially good. It seems wise to accept the proposition of the Hindu philosophers that no universal predication about human nature as such is possible. Some individuals have in them the predominance of good or *sattva* and *punya*, and some have in them the predominance of *tamas*, *rajas* and *apunya*. Man partakes both of good and evil. He has the potentialities both of Rama and Ravana in him. It will not be correct, however, to maintain that the evil in man is wholly responsible for indiscipline. Indiscipline, after all, is a socially relative category. What a person in authority regards as indiscipline may not really be so. It cannot be maintained that the evil in man occasionally bursts into socially deviant and subversive activities. Habitual indiscipline may be a form of chronic physical and psychic maladjustment but, in general, it is possible to state that various manifestations of indiscipline can be corrected through the process of proper education and training.<sup>1</sup>

It may be said that the older conception of discipline as external imposition has to be given up. Discipline cannot be dictated or imposed by coercion. *Danda* or punishment is not the essence of discipline. *Danda* may occasionally become an element for the enforcement of discipline but it is time that the notion behind the oft-quoted maxim "spare the rod and spoil the child" were given up. Discipline has to flow from the logic of the enterprise itself. The school is a place where teachers and pupils engage themselves in conjoint experiences. They are together engaged in serving the cause of perpetuation of learning through educating the younger generation. This process of education has to be made so attractive and inspiring that the total situation itself imposes the discipline necessary for doing the work. The concrete processes of instruction should be so analyzed that the intellectual transition from one stage to

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<sup>1</sup> B. W. Maturin, *Self-knowledge and Self-Discipline* (Longmans, 1915); Laurence F. Shaffer, *The Psychology of Adjustment* (Houghton Mifflin, 1936).

another has a meaning and an attraction. The educative process should have the capacity to absorb the energies and attention of the boys. It demands great thinking from the teaching population so that they may be able to convert empty instruction by the dry and mechanical methods of rote into a systematic revelation of new pieces of interesting details for students. I am not pleading for flippancy or non-seriousness. I am pleading for a very serious handling of the problem of converting the lifeless details of arithmetic and history, into a systematic artistic presentation. Why is geometry more interesting than the sums of "practice" mentioned in arithmetic? It requires great penetration into the intricacies of the subject if it is to be converted into an artistic whole. Only he who is a master of his subject can rise above the purely mechanical side of the thing and can impart a meaningful logic into it. He alone, who is in living, dynamic, everyday touch with the subject can convert it into an interesting and inspiring study. This kind of teaching which I am pleading for requires that the teacher feels delight in teaching. He should be in love with the subject he is handling. From my own experience I can say that in my career as a teacher and research scholar I have been interested deeply and emotionally only in those things which were originally taught to me by inspired teachers. My late revered father has been my greatest teacher. He was devoted to religion, literature and history. He was responsible for making me interested in these three subjects. My interest in Hindi literature is due to the influence of three or four of my successful school teachers. I was unfortunate in not having a good mathematics teacher in my school career. Today when I contemplate my past career I feel deep remorse, that to my misfortune, I never got a good teacher of mathematics and geography. I make bold to say that good teaching is an invaluable blessing and teachers do hold the destiny of the nation in their hands. In my college days I had three or four good history teachers and from them I developed a taste for history. Hence I do not think I am exaggerating when I say that teaching has to be interesting and inspiring. I realize that there are some areas of a subject which require careful study and may involve deep concentration but on reflection it will be

apparent that even they have logical connections and interconnections amongst themselves and with the subject matter as a whole. It will be expedient to stress this logical side of the matter in teaching. If teaching is imparted in the way I am pleading, the whole process will assume a harmonious and cooperative appearance in which both the faculty and students will be willing partners and cases of indiscipline will seldom arise.

Another significant element in discipline is the life of the teacher himself. It is not possible to separate the element of character from the process of teaching. The character of the teacher is of foremost significance. The ancient Sanskrit term for the teacher is *Acharya*. It means one who moulds the character of the younger generation. Unless the teacher is of an exemplary character he cannot create any influence upon the mind of the students. An exalted character has a capacity of evoking response and respect from others. In the ancient days Vishwamitra, Vasistha and Drona evoked great veneration not only from their students but from the community because they had an elevated character. Today the universities are crowded with teachers who have come to the educational profession for the sole reason that they could not get entrance into the top executive services. The main themes of their talks are emoluments, pensions, provident fund and remunerations. It is ridiculous if such teachers demand from the students a loyalty and a respect which Karna had for Parasurama. We do not have to imitate the Western practice. In the context of Indian culture the teacher had always enjoyed a dignified and exalted status. That tradition can be revived if the teachers stick to research work and do not waste their time in trade union activities. I realize that in these days of mounting costs of living, it is essential to give to the teachers adequate and decent living wages. But I do not think that it is wise to consume all our energies in rather fruitless and even futile talks of economic promotion and advancement. It is a gross betrayal for a teacher to think of promotion through manipulation. A teacher flattering and bowing before the political rulers may get some economic increment but he can never create in the minds and hearts of the students that centre of reverence and esteem for

himself from which all true discipline proceeds. Today to increase their personal popularity some teachers would go to the extent of offering cigarettes to the students. They know that they do not possess the necessary character to control the students and hence the only way they can hope to keep the confidence of the students is through these mean tactics. This creates an unhealthy atmosphere.

The personality of the teacher is one of the most essential factors for discipline.<sup>1</sup> It has two sides. First, he must be true to his profession.<sup>2</sup> He must be a master of the subject he teaches. There is no justification for going unprepared to the class. He must go to the class in time and should feel that he is there in quest of the novelty of intellectual experience. The entire period should be devoted to teaching. There are some teachers who waste the time of the students by narrating pleasant but useless stories. This is gross betrayal. If they are paid for doing their work they must perform their duties loyally. The personality of every pupil is to be stressed and every one of them is to be so treated as if he were an adventure of existence. This will raise the entire tone of the class and give it a moral dimension.

A second aspect of the character of the teacher is impartiality. Unless the teacher has an equal and impartial attitude towards all students he will not be able to maintain discipline. It is unfortunate that in this country all kinds of local and sectional questions have assumed importance and they possess sway over the minds both of teachers and students. But this kind of identification is prejudicial to the maintenance of discipline. It is injurious in the public interest also, because it destroys the harmony of social interest and public advantage. In order to win that love and respect of the student population

<sup>1</sup> Personality refers to a whole and it includes the totality of physical mental and moral traits that distinguish one human being from another.

<sup>2</sup> In the language of the *Gita* it can be said that both the students and the teachers should be devoted to their *svadharma* (स्वधर्मं निधनं श्रेयः). By *svadharma* I do not mean perpetuation of a stratified immobile society but I want a sanctification of obligations and a devoted pursuit of duty.

which is the foundation of discipline, the teacher has to act equally and impartially towards all students.

But the discipline of the schools and colleges will have weak roots if the student population has not been properly nurtured in the primary groups. The social significance of primary groups like the family and the neighbourhood is great. If the boys have not been properly trained in the primary groups they tend to become unsocial and take delight in creating mischief.<sup>1</sup> A student who has been given proper opportunity at home for his creative development will evolve into an ideal citizen. Every home has to be converted into the foundation for creating citizens with a socially-integrated personality. All kinds of frustrations, neuroses and nervous tensions which jeopardize the happiness of the individual have their origin in the absence of love and affection at home and in the surroundings.

A most potent cause of indiscipline is the absence of adequate economic opportunities. In the absence of economic opportunities great hardships are experienced and these often tend to express themselves in anti-social activities. It is always unwise to deny to people their legitimate demands. A demand, once satisfied in time, may save endless future trouble. Unless the students are properly fed and clothed they cannot be expected to take interest in their day to day work. In the absence of lack of vigor and zest for their curriculum, their unchanalized energies will be available for anti-social work.

It has been rightly pointed out that one significant element in indiscipline is the excess of restraints. It is always wise to avoid extremes. Extremes of restraint and license are equally injurious for discipline. There is no antithesis between discipline and freedom. Without discipline of our energies freedom will degenerate into license and will eventually result in moral decline. On the other hand, an excess of discipline results in

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<sup>1</sup> John Morgan, *The Psychology of the Unadjusted School Child* (London, Macmillan, 1926). John Dollard and others, *Frustration and Aggression* (New Haven, Yale University Press, 1939). Modern psychologists are agreed that anxiety, frustration, lack of security, absence of pleasure, persistent failures in achieving the desired objectives etc., result in aggressive and indisciplined behavior. Thus it can be said that conflicts are caused by psychological "complexes".

generating an attitude of protest. Coercion and intimidation create an attitude of revolt and that leads to complexes and inhibitions. Hence it is essential to maintain a middle way between license and excessive restraint.

The problem of discipline is a complex one.<sup>1</sup> Student indiscipline is only one aspect, although a very important aspect, but by no means the only or sole aspect, of the vast problem. To create confusion at the time of getting into and getting out of railway compartments, to create hooliganism in public meetings, to pass remarks against travellers and women, all are aspects of indiscipline. On the other hand, organized resistance of a non-violent type against the holders of power, is not indiscipline. But it is indiscipline to interrupt a member when he is expressing his views in a Legislative Assembly. Discipline certainly never means accepting the dictates and commands of the people in authority. But it postulates an attitude of mind which wants to do a thing in an organized and planned manner. If a battle cannot be won by indiscipline, neither can a nation be built by indiscipline.

Today the country has embarked upon a gigantic project of reconstructing the diverse aspect of its life. At every step discipline is needed. All the aspects and phases of our social and political life have been exposed to devastating inroads and the collapse of moral standards is visible at all places. The problem demands a concentrated effort, if it is to be solved.

Peace is both a psychological and sociological phenomenon. It is an attitude of the mind as well as the attribute of a social and political structure. Discipline has reference both to the psychological and the sociological aspects of peace. A disciplined harmonious mind is the best preparation for peace. Peace cannot be dictated from the top. It requires cultivation and preparation. If war needs preparation, peace has also its criteria and they have to be followed. One of the greatest dangers to international peace is the use of intemperate language. Violence in one country breeds violence in the other too. A train of distrust, suspicion, hatred and fear is released and the contamination of atmosphere goes on increasing. If

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<sup>1</sup> Locke stressed "self-development through self-discipline."

honest-minded citizens everywhere take upon themselves the task of creating an attitude of good will, trust and confidence in the minds of the citizens of their respective countries they will be going a long way towards the creation of that atmosphere of harmony which is essential for mutual concord and peace. To our great pain and deep humiliation we have to confess that in the period, 1922 to 1947, the newspaper press was one of the main factors for inciting communal passions and frenzy. This use of unrestrained speech is a danger to peace. A citizen has the right to preach against the government, if according to his conscience, he feels, that the political authority is not acting in accordance with the canons of the maintenance of fundamental rights and justice. But he should not preach disaffection and hatred amongst the several classes and should not incite feelings of criminality and violent agitation. There is a disciplined way of doing things. Freedom and peace lie not in unrestrained capacity for self-assertion but in genuine opportunities for the noble expression of the creative harmony of the soul. Freedom consists in a peaceful and disciplined use of opportunities.



## *Education of the Electorate in India*

### **I. Democracy and Education in India**

One of the most prominent social phenomena of the last one hundred and fifty years is the emergence of the masses or the fourth estate to significance. The dominance of monarchical autocracy, aristocratic plutocracy and the oligarchical elite is on the wane. It may be true that the key political decisions might still be made by a few individuals in all polities irrespective of the differences in the external form of the governmental mechanism. But this essentially monopolistic nature of top governmental power does not neutralize our broad thesis that compared to the ancient, medieval and early modern epochs of history, the people as a whole are tending to assume a stature of significance. Even the most regimented of dictatorial regimes have today to resort to all kinds of propaganda and publicity devices to obtain the confidence of the people. This upsurge of the people has been a consequence of the rise of modern science, technology, an equalitarian social philosophy and education.

Education today is one of the most essential ingredients of personality. Democracy is postulated upon the most universal dispersion of education. Education enhances the political personality of the voter, whose sovereignty, democracy is a formula and an attempt to enshrine. It is not an exaggeration to say that democracy is an utter farce without the education of the electorate. Hence the right to education is being gradually conceded and guaranteed as a human right. The movement of compulsory education is a trend in the same direction. It is being gradually recognized that not only there has to be provision for compulsory elementary education but the newer scientific technics of pedagogy have to be popularized. It is one of the cardinal points of democracy that there should be

equality of educational opportunity and not birth but proved merit should be the criterion for entrance to schools and universities and services.

The growth of democracy has made necessary a new sociological approach to education. We can no longer remain content with regarding education as a private training for producing a gentleman or as a mystic process of esoteric enlightenment. Education has come to be regarded as a social technic for community adjustment and group accommodation. In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, it was felt that the aim of education is the cultivation and liberation of one's faculties and this aim was sought to be realized mostly in connexion with the children of the aristocracy. But this purely individualistic approach cannot suit the needs of a dynamic, expansive and democratic society which our people want to have realized in this country. If we want our voters to exercise their sovereign right of choosing the legislators aright, we have to view education not as an abstract process of personal salvation but as a social technique of moulding and influencing human behavior. Education has to be related to our social demands and economic supplies and it has to be oriented to the political expectations that the electorate will exercise the right choice at the time of polls. This sociological functional approach to the problem of education of the Indian electorate has two significant implications.

(i) The Indian society and culture, so far, have been dominated by an attitude of reverence for the scriptures and for people in the socially higher strata. This has facilitated the inculcation and imposition of the dogmatic whims of the ascendant classes in the garb of religious pronouncements. Democracy on the other hand, needs the development of the persistent habit of quest. Hence the Indian educational system has to foster today an attitude of rational enquiry and comprehension. This functional approach to education has to be widely accepted for the success of our infant democracy.

(ii) The overall emphasis in a democratic society has to be on constant spontaneous growth. This means that the attitude of 'pathetic contentment', routine, apathy and inertia has to be replaced by an attitude of interest in activities oriented to

the growth of the community. This involves that the voters have to be provided an education which will give them zest and vigor for political and social activities. Instead of thinking that by voting, they are rendering some help to or obliging the candidates, the high moral and political significance of the franchise has to be borne in mind. A consciousness of the great value of democracy is essential and the inchoate atomic voters have to be transformed into groups with developed powers of institutional behavior. Adult suffrage is a new development in India. According to the Morely-Minto Reforms (1909), the Montague-Chelmsford Reforms (1919) and the Government of India Act of 1935 the suffrage was restricted. A tremendous forward stride has been taken in investing the Indian people of and above twenty-one years of age with the right of voting. There are plenty of chances that this new right may be abused and hence there is great necessity of a new intelligentsia recruited from all sections of the Indian society that can make the electors conscious of their new responsibilities, obligations and rights.

The education of the Indian electorate implies that the population of and above twenty-one years of age should be educated. This involves, as a first condition, a persistent crusade against illiteracy. A Mohammad, an Akbar or a Shivaji might rise to supreme eminence without being literate but for the vast masses of population, literacy is the indispensable condition of mental growth. A second condition of the education of the Indian electorate is that political education should be given to the literate population. This may involve the supplementation of the education provided in schools and colleges. The educational institutions have to be viewed not merely as isolated cloisters but as entities in an interdependent social world. This sociological approach to the education of the Indian electorate implies that the latter have to be fitted for acting and role-taking in a complex adult world of secondary relations. The primary and simple world of the family and the village no longer exhausts the bounds of the activities of the citizen. He has to exercise significant political choices at stated intervals. He has to choose the members of the *Panchayat*, the legislative assembly and the parliament. This involves that adequate

information should be supplied to him and this implies, in a sense, the necessity of continued education.

For the success of Indian democracy we want hard-working citizens. They should have interest in a variety of political activities and should have great subtlety in judging the merits and demerits of the prospective candidates for election. It is true that the behavior of the elector in the Asian countries has often been characterized by instability and gullibility but there is room for progressive improvement. In face of the rampant corruption, nepotism and vulgarity prevailing in certain sections of the Indian political and administrative quarters it is not an irrelevant platitude to assert once more with Plato and Aristotle that we need virtue in our citizens. The more material advantage of education that it leads to the qualitative improvement of personal power of responsiveness and skill which in turn accentuate the powers of productiveness is widely accepted. Education will impart to the electors greater skill in conversation, they can interrogate the party members properly and can impress upon the legislators the supreme necessity of devising programs for the all-round improvement of the population. The electorate has to demand jobs, equality of social and economic opportunity, the provision of adequate means for the growth of physical vitality and culture as well as facilities for political participation. The tension in the international field is increasing day by day and the sectors of local dissensions in India are too many. At such a time it is essential that the electors should have correct responses to the values and technics of the different political parties. A mere conventional attitude of the acceptance of things as they are would not avail. Furthermore, the behavior of the Indian electorate is characterized by an attitude of dominant apathy. They need constant guidance, encouragement and stimulation to participate in group activities.

## **2. The Contents of the Education of the Indian Electorate : Social Science, Psychology and Ethics**

Without being dogmatic on the contents of the education of the Indian electorate it can be pointed out that some knowledge of the country's history is essential. For example, every elector

should have some idea as to how Pakistan was born. An elementary knowledge of civics, Indian constitution and Indian public administration may be considered the second item. A very rudimentary knowledge of Indian economics may be regarded as another theme of education. Some information regarding inflation, foreign loans and the food situation in the country is essential. As a fourth item, we can list some knowledge of international politics. It is true that even keen students of international law and politics find it difficult to keep abreast of the overshifting dynamics and balance of world situation but it is not demanding too much from the electors if we say that they should know something about the military alliance of Pakistan and the U.S.A., the rise of communist China and the tension in the Middle East.

To this education in the social and historical sciences of the Indian electorate, I will like to add some elements of psychological education. The mental atmosphere of the whole Indian nation is poisoned because of dissensions on grounds of province, caste and even race (at least in some portions of South India). Hence sentimental ideologies are on the increase and they are impediments in the path of free mental growth. The country is full of emotional epidemics and hence it is essential to counteract the exploitation of the group emotion of the electorate. The growth of sectionalism and provincialism has resulted in almost a collapse of moral standards in politics. The dangerous infiltration of disruptionist ideologies is not only creating ruptures in the body politic of India but is leading to the formation of social sores which may destroy the freedom of the country itself. During the nearly three or four months prior and posterior to general elections the public atmosphere is marked by intense nervous tension, psychological fever and emotional instability. The witch-doctors of fervid propaganda continue to pour their poison. There is a deterioration of cultural ethics and standards. The symptoms of conflict within castes, groups and provinces come to the uppermost. During the elections of 1952 in Bihar there have been some shameful cases of caste riots. Hence it is essential that the electors be firmly attached to the concept of the integration of the country and not fall a prey to pseudo-

patriotical ideologies. This makes essential the resort to the educational process of the unmasking of ideologies by laying bare their concealed origins and by showing their connexions with the hidden interests of different pressure groups, factions and disloyal elements. The attractive symbols and cheap slogans which serve to distort the concrete social and political reality have to be rationally analyzed. In the context of the disruptionist ideologies of some Indian political parties, the accentuation of the process of the imbibing of values calculated to strengthen the foundation of the Indian nation is a supreme imperative. The supreme necessity of the hour is to counteract the emotional, moral and cultural collapse and prostration. Only a process of rational education can act as a deterrent against this alarming decline of a healthy political life. It is essential to have a vigorous self-reliant electorate. A psychological re-education can alone produce the type of electors who will be immune against the dangerous infiltration of sectionalist and violent ideologies.

Sometimes the Indian elector is faced with situations which disturb his psychological balance. This maladjustment is the consequence of several interconnected factors. The country has embarked on the huge planning of its economic life. The plan-makers claim to extend economic opportunities for the people. On the other hand there is mounting inflation. Hence the elector is seized with a sense of nihilism. The Indian intelligentsia which plays a powerful role in elections is plagued with the prospect of proletarianization. Economic peril was one of the root causes of the rise of German Nazism. It is essential to explain our economic policy to the electors thoroughly but I doubt if their confidence would be restored unless the prices go down.

At times the Indian political parties create an atmosphere which is favorable to the generation of neuroses in the minds of the Indian electors because ambivalent forces continue infecting them. The voters find that the parties talk of substantive moral and rational values like world peace, non-violence and *Panch-sheel*; on the other hand they take recourse to violent technics, bribery and corruption to gain their selfish ends.

Thus, this disproportion between their idealism and their concrete conduct creates a tension in the mind of the electors and they do not know whom to choose. The electors, most of them illiterate and subjected to the corrosive influences of a competitive economy with mounting inflation, lose their emotional balance. The social reality seems to them to be utterly unpleasant. This is the situation for the formation of neurotic personality which in turn, can be exploited by the manipulating device of modern parties and pressure group. Only a sound education on right psychological and moral lines can act as a deterrent to these maladjustments. It is imperative to utilize, hence, the forces of group inter-stimulation for strengthening the positive moral forces of society. In times of economic troubles it becomes still more essential to emphasize values. A second objective is also essential. Ours has been mainly an inequalitarian social structure so far, and this fosters repressions, taboos and inhibitions which hinder the free spontaneous growth of a democratic personality. Hence the education for the Indian electorate has to take into consideration the psychological point of view also. This will involve a comprehensive plan of psychological re-education. It is not possible to think of the school, society, and state as absolute separate compartments. The growth of personality has to be encouraged at all levels and in all areas. An all-permeating social consciousness of democratic values makes essential a process of thorough psychological and moral education of the electors. Voting is not a sporadic mechanical act but the manifested symbol of our political personality.

There are some other evils too of Indian political life. The candidates and the parties regard the voter as a mere tool. Their loyalty is to the empty slogan of democracy but they have not yet learnt to respect the autonomous personality of the voter as a source of worth and value in himself. The inner assimilation of the moral values of democracy is essential. The mentality of the voter as well as of the candidates and parties has to be transformed. Some sections of the ruling parties in India behave at times autocratically and even ferociously. It is necessary, therefore, to train the voter in the attitudes of

strength, dignity, vigor and self-reliance. The voter is never a subservient adjunct of the democratic process but a moral entity.

### **3. Agencies of the Education of the Indian Electorate**

I have sketched a rather ambitious program of the education of the Indian electorate. This will involve the co-operation of diverse agencies. The state will have to shoulder primary responsibility for making literate the illiterate sections of the electors. On the other hand, some philanthropic associations like the Ramakrishna Mission and the Arya Samaj can also help in this work of disseminating literacy. So far as imparting political education to the electorate is concerned, it can be done by political parties through the organization of public meetings, seminars and study camps as well as by the public relations and propaganda and information departments of the government. Both the spoken and the written word have to be utilized as the media of education. Besides the usual educational establishments and institutions, the services of the radio, newspapers, magazines, pamphlets, leaflets, public meetings etc. have also to be utilized. Occasionally extra-mural lectures and extension lecture on political topics can be organized at the universities and they should be open to the public.

### **4. Conclusion**

The education of the Indian electorate cannot be made a sphere of entire planning because that will lead to regimentation. Neither can it be a sphere of *ad hoc* improvisation. We have to attain a harmonious synthesis of regulation and initiative. Education has to run in response to the movements of social forces. It is essential to fight the totalitarian and monopolistic control of the educational process. Over-standardization under state direction is an invitation to the suppression of individuality. In a mass democracy we have to stress the democratic values of independence, the fearless advocacy of truth, initiative, participant cooperation, fair play and justice. Mutual consideration is essential for the success of democracy.

Only a sound education of the electorate can be the effective antidote to the eruption of barbaric and anarchic disruptionist trends and forces in our country. This involves that as children and as adolescents the future adult electors must have been wisely and rightly schooled. Habits calculated to foster the social and moral growth of the community and the state have to be ingrained in the character of the electorate from their earliest days.

**PART THREE**  
**APPENDICES**



## APPENDIX ONE

### *Plato and the Veda*

Plato's significance is almost universal. Not only did he systematize pre-Socratic and Socratic philosophy but he was the real founder of metaphysical idealism in the West. A. N. Whitehead holds that the whole of modern philosophy is a series of footnotes on Plato.<sup>1</sup> "The divine Plato", although stigmatized as a fascist and a totalitarian apologist by some pseudo-critics like Popper<sup>2</sup> and others, remains for all times to come the arch-prophet of a moral and valuational approach to politics. This supreme artist and the great mathematician (Plato), champions the cause of virtue in immensely poetic terms and at a critical time like ours we can learn a lot from him. The Vedas, condemned by some as the primitive remnants of Indo-Aryan barbarians, have exercised a very powerful influence on the thought of India. I do not accept the mystical interpretation of the Vedic hymns as put forward by Aurobindo, nor do I think that they are the literary revelations of divine gnosis given to the Aryan rishis, as advocated by Dayananda. I take the Vedas at their face value and still believe that modern India can learn something from some of the profound and vitally inspired mantras of the Veda.<sup>3</sup> In attempting this comparative study of Plato and the Veda I am not unmindful of the vast differences that we find in

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<sup>1</sup> Whitehead, *Process and Reality*, p. 63 : "The safest general characterization of the European philosophical tradition is that it consists of a series of footnotes to Plato."

<sup>2</sup> Karl Popper, *The Open Society and its Enemies*, Vol. I. Contrast the views of Rupert C. Lodge, "Plato and Progress", *The Philosophical Review*, 1946, pp. 651-67.

<sup>3</sup> I have explained my detailed views on the Vedas in two of my research papers : "The Origin of the Upanishadic Religion and Philosophy in the Vedas", *Journal of the Bihar Research Society*, December 1950 and "Advaitavada and Veda" (in Hindi), *Parijata*, Patna, 1946.

them.<sup>1</sup> The logical consistency of Plato and the unity of thought that we find in his dialogues, we do not get in the Vedas. Plato is a first-rate metaphysician<sup>2</sup> while the Vedic rishis were at best, only poetic singers. But still I have attempted this comparative analysis because I am convinced that both of them—Plato's dialogues and the Vedic Samhitas—have something important to teach to man in the choice of his destiny. A mere organizational socio-economic-political change, although necessary, is not enough. Man today is more self-conscious than in the antique and Medieval civilizations and he has to make a fundamental and deliberate choice. We have to find out a remedy to save us from crises and decline.

Plato accepts the theory of ideas. The immutable archetypal ideas are the ultimate reality according to him.<sup>3</sup> These ideas culminate in the Idea of the Good.<sup>4</sup> It is significant that

<sup>1</sup> The general problem of the historical relationship between Indian and Greek thought has been discussed by Richard Garbe, A. B. Keith, George P. Conger and others.

<sup>2</sup> Paul Deussen, *Die Philosophie Der Griechen*, pp. 245-68; *The Elements of Metaphysics*. W. Lutoslawski, *The Origin and Growth of Plato's Logic*, pp. 526-27, makes an estimate of Plato's achievements in almost superlative terms : "He (Plato) did not live in isolation, like Descartes or Spinoza, nor in a whirl of worldly interests, like Leibnitz, nor in humiliating dependence upon an absolute Government, like Kant or Hegel. He stands far above his great teacher, far above his great pupil, alone in his incomparable greatness, and his works are only a splendid remembrance of his living activity...But for us Plato's dialogues are unique and are a literary and philosophical monument, and deserve the greatest attention of all who long for metaphysical Truth, who remain dissatisfied with the world of appearances and with the passing aims of material life."

<sup>3</sup> For a discussion of the aesthetic and methodological aspects of Plato's doctrine of the ideas see J. A. Stewart, *Plato's Doctrine of Ideas*. Paul Natrop, *Platos Ideenlehre*, upholds the methodological significance of the doctrine of ideas. See also Ueberweg, *History of Philosophy*, I, p. 115. For a discussion of the Idea of the Good see W. Lutoslawski, *The Origin and Growth of Plato's Logic* (New York, 1905), pp. 294, 298.

<sup>4</sup> *Republic* VI, 502C to 509C ; *Phaedo* 97B to 99C ; *Philebus* 64B to 65A. Also R. Nettleship, *Lectures on the Republic of Plato*, pp. 212-37 ; N. R. Murphy, *The Interpretation of Plato's*

the ultimate reality is not an abstraction but is conceived in axiological terms. This amounts to a deep enshrinement of the objectivity of ethical factors. The Vedas accept the reality of the cosmos and of the various gods and goddesses but beyond them all they posit the substantial reality of the one fundamental spiritual existent :

"आनीदवातं स्वधया तदेकम्" (*Rigveda*, X, 1292).

X                    X                    X                    X

एकं सद्गुरा वहृथा वदन्ति (*R. V.* 1.164.46).

It is true that in modern science and philosophy one finds a reaction against any monistic absolutism. Bergson, James and Whitehead are illustrative of this tendency. Even the old theologies are now being re-interpreted in terms of process and 'event' and 'history' and the concepts of substantial stability and unity are being challenged. It appears that both Plato and the Veda are to this extent anachronistic. By a process of pure reason it is difficult to defend spiritual monism. Hence mystics like Aurobindo take recourse to a supramental vision and experience. But the failure of Buddhism to replace the Vedic-Upanishadic absolute by a processual dynamism shows that an ultimate foundational reality has to be posited to satisfy the spiritual quest of man. Force, energy, quanta, mass, process, dynamism, dialectic, relativism are good working concepts but the thinking intellectual in the deepest moment of solitariness, frustration, despair and gloom cannot survive by making a catechism of these abstract concepts. He needs the solace of a vast unitary, absolute moral and spiritual being.

The world of mutation, multiplicity, and change is a shadow according to Plato. It is a cave which is only dimly lit by the light of the sun of supreme knowledge. Man has to ascend to the highest status of knowledge and then bring down with him the supernal light. Although mentalism and subjectivism become dominant in later Vedanta, in the Vedas and the order

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*Republic*, pp. 184-86. Oswald Spengler, *The Decline of the West*, I, p. 365, considers Plato to be a mystic but Cassirer denies Plato's mysticism. There does not seem to be much basis for Spengler's views, *Ibid*, 494, that while Aristotle and Kant create a philosophy of being, Plato and Goethe are philosophers of becoming. See also F. M. Cornford, *From Religion to Philosophy*, pp. 243, 247 ff.

Upanishads we find a strong ontological realism which shows the importance of cosmic, terrestrial and human values and existence. Like Plato, the Vedas and the Upanishads teach the imperative necessity of the attainment of divine knowledge.

तद्विष्णोः परमं पदं सदा पश्यन्ति सूरयः (*Rigveda*, T 22.20).

X - - - X      X      X  
तमेव विदित्वातिमृत्युमेति नान्यः पन्था विद्यतेऽयनाय  
(*Tajurveda*, xxxi/18).

X      X      X      X  
अविद्या मृत्युं तीक्ष्वा विद्ययामृतमश्नुते (*Tajurveda*, XL/14).

The dominant trend in modern social and natural sciences is to dismiss all extra-cosmic explanations of material and social phenomena and to insist on a detailed investigation of the processes. But the question remains : What has humanity really gained by the colossal amassing of "data" on so staggering a scale ? We are like children collecting toys and then destroying them. Inspite of the lack in the Vedas and Plato of emotional neutrality, empirical investigation and scientific precision, I strongly feel that a man can get greater elevation by reading the dialogues of Plato and the Vedas than by mastering all the huge details of modern government reports, blue books, surveys, committee reports and recommendations. We do not have to be theists and believers, but for erecting an integrated social life and a balanced outlook Plato and the Veda are more important than anything else which the modern world has to offer. The aim of the social sciences should be to produce better men and better citizens and for this civic and moral education we need the teachings of the Vedas and Plato.

Plato accepts the notion of cosmic necessity. There is the mighty spindle of necessity and to that are linked all the great spheres of the universe. Lachesis, Clotho and Atropos hold the past and the present and the future under their control. But there is at least open to man the act of initial choice of his destiny. He has an amount of initial freedom, both ethical and psychological.<sup>1</sup> The Vedas speak of the *Rita*—the cosmic

<sup>1</sup> *Republic*, 618 : "Your genius will not be allotted to you, but you will choose your genius ; and let him who draws the first lot have the first choice, and the life which he chooses

power of moral governance. Like the Greek *Moira*, the *Rita* controls both gods and men. The modern world does not accept a theological determinism as advocated by the *Bhagavad-gita* or St. Augustine or Dayananda. It does not accept the metaphysical determinism of Plato or Hegel or the Vedanta. Instead we have the determinism of blind scientific laws which are sometimes called phenomenological generalizations after Einstein, Planck, Heisenberg, Bohr etc. No matter what the nature and structure of the determining force be, but if necessity is the ultimate fact then subjective freedom of the will, either in the form of the Kantian self-consciousness of the categorical imperative or the democratic conception of an autonomous political choice by a self-determining individual, is reduced to a myth. Freedom thereby would become a matter of mere aspiration and not of realizable actuality. Determinism is a persistent factor of human experience. But freedom also is the ever-present ambition of the thinking self. How to reconcile the two ? If we believe in a moral governance of the world and if we formulate our ways of action and behavior accordingly, perhaps we get a degree of freedom within the dominant structure of necessity. The individual life-force has to encounter tremendous odds in course of the struggle for existence and most often the life-force appears crushed. What has to be done ? Even a cold philosophic stoicism<sup>1</sup> appears wanting. Only a faith in the eventual prevalence and victory of truth can save us. Hence the Veda says : ऋतस्य पन्थामन्वेति साधु ।

The acceptance of the value of a moral faith is formulated in the *Republic*. Against Polemarchus, Thrasymachus and Glaucon, Plato asserts the notion of the inwardness of justice. Justice is the basic foundational virtue and it is immensely superior to injustice. Hence it is necessary to cultivate the ethical faculties and power politics has to be moderated by, if not entirely replaced by, the rule of dialectical reason and the

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shall be his destiny. Virtue is free, and as a man honours her he will have more or less of her ; the responsibility is with the chooser—God is justified.”

<sup>1</sup> For the inadequacies of Stoicism as a philosophy for man, see Hegel, *The Phenomenology of Mind* and Sri Aurobindo, *Essays on the Gita*.

primordial law revealed by the great lawgivers. The Vedas also teach the supremacy of *Dharma* and *Vrata*—the moral categories of existence :

इदमहमनृतात् सत्यमुपैष्मि (*Yajurveda*, I. 5).

It is true that ethical teachings, whether they be of Buddha, or Jesus Christ, or Kant, or Gandhi, have failed to bring the regeneration of man. But is that a reason for despair ? Against the entrenched ramparts of vested economic and political strongholds, united by the common lust for accumulation of gains by the exploitation of the weak man, the lone voice of the silent prophet—Socrates or Plato or Dirghatmas—appears fruitless. But if the prophet stops his sermons, we shall revert to the Hobbesian state of nature. Anthropology and historical sociology do give us evidence to show that man progressed because of the influence of the evolution of an ethical code by superior moral heroes and teachers. If moral power is not to remain an impotent factor then it is possible to visualize the combination of dialectical philosophy and political rulership. Plato's concept of the philosopher-ruler provided inspiration to Cicero and Fichte.<sup>1</sup> The Vedas also visualize the harmonious fusion of *Brahma* (spiritual power) and *Kshatra* (political and military power) :

इदं मे व्रह्म च क्षत्रं चोभे श्रियमश्नुताम् (*Yajurveda*, xxx-II. 16).

The *Atharvaveda* states that only by a conformity to the moral code of discipline and self-restraint can the ruler attain the power to protect the kingdom :

व्रह्मचर्येण राजा राप्टुं विरक्षति (*Atharvaveda*, ix, 3, 5, 16).

I find that, thus there is a remarkable similarity between the political philosophy of Plato<sup>2</sup> and the *Atharvaveda* because both accept the canon of the combination of spiritual reason and political force and authority.

While I am trying to focus attention on the dominant moral approach to politics in Plato and the Veda I am not unmindful of several weaknesses in their thought-structures. Plato could not absolutely eliminate from his thought the distinction

<sup>1</sup> Cicero, *On the Commonwealth*; Walter Becher, *Platon und Fichte : die königliche Erziehungskunst* (Jena, 1937).

<sup>2</sup> For the hierarchy of values in Plato see *Philebus* 65A-67A.

between the Hellenes and the barbarians and the citizens and the slaves.<sup>1</sup> The *Rigveda* postulates the distinction between the Aryan and the Dasyu. Hence in both Plato and the Veda we find some narrow localism and limited patriotism. Plato's authoritarianism revealed in his proposal to vest the guardians with absolute power is indefensible in a modern democratic context.<sup>2</sup> Similarly is indefensible the monarchical orientation of the Veda.

But inspite of these and several other weaknesses, what still attracts me to Plato and the Veda is their gospel of vitality,<sup>3</sup> strength and moral power. Notwithstanding several logical, scientific-cosmological, historical and other errors in Plato and the Veda, I feel tremendously inspired by these words of precious wisdom. They provide us an invincible moral strength, the capacity to stand in the face of authority and to resist it in the name of truth and justice. Plato has provided literary immortality to the supreme figure of the heroic Socrates. "Wherefore, O Judges, be of good cheer about death, and know of a certainty that no evil can happen to a good man, either in life or after death. He and his are not neglected by the gods ; nor has my own approaching end happened by mere chance... For which reason, also, I am not angry with my condemners, or with my accusers ; they have done me no harm, although they did not mean to do me any good ; and for this I may gently blame them.....if they (my sons) seem to care about riches, or anything more than about virtue ; or if they pretend to be something when they are really nothing—then reprove them." (Plato's *Apology*, 41). The supreme Vedic gospel is also "fearlessness". As the Vedas declare :

यतोयतः समीहसे ततो नोऽभयं कुरु (*Yajurveda*, xxxvi. 22).

×                    ×                    ×                    ×

तमेव विद्वान् न विभाय मृत्योः (*Atharvaveda*, x. 8. 44).

<sup>1</sup> Constantin Ritter, *Platon II*, 596-609 and *The Essence of Plato's Philosophy*, p. 329 holds that "Slavery has no place in the ideal state of the *Republic*" but several scholars advocate the contrary standpoint.

<sup>2</sup> Compare : A. M. Adam : *Plato* (Cambridge, 1913), pp. 133-42.

<sup>3</sup> James Adam, *The Vitality of Platonism* (Cambridge, 1934), pp. 1-34.

The gospel of fearlessness as a social and a political ideal has been advocated by two great modern neo-Vedantists, Vivekananda and Ramatirtha. On the basis of the *Bhagavadgita* Mahatma Gandhi made *Abhayam* (अभयम्) one of the great vows of a Satyagrahi.

Our country is passing through an epoch of formlessness, confusion, and weakness. We need the political and moral philosophy of Plato<sup>1</sup> and the Veda—the two great architects of two of the greatest cultures and civilizations on the earth. Prophets of doom may declare the cult of moral inertia and historylessness or the blind worship of the West to be the only paths of salvation for us. But a source of tremendous optimism, moral faith and spiritual grandeur is contained in Plato and the Veda. A political philosophy in India does not have to repeat the morally damaging doctrines of the Western scholars and thinkers like Machiavelli, Hobbes and Nietzsche and neglect the inspired and vital teachings of the great sages, philosophers and prophets like Plato and the authors of the Vedic Samhitas. For political success we need faith in the spirit of man. Only a strong humanist faith and only a mighty ethical and spiritual teaching can provide a galvanizing creed. And only that which provides strength to a nation and to individuals is truth and is worth surviving :

सा मा सत्योक्तिः परिपातु (*Rigveda*, x. 37. 2).

<sup>1</sup> For good discussions of Plato's political philosophy see Werner Jaegar, *Paideia* (New York, 1943); Ernst Cassirer, *The Myth of the State*, pp. 53-77; R. C. Lodge, *Plato's Theory of Education*; L. Strauss "Plato's Political Philosophy", *Social Research*, 1946, 326-367, presents a criticism of John Wild's *Plato's Theory of Man: An Introduction to the Realistic Philosophy of Culture* (Harvard, 1946); also Bosanquet, *Companion to Plato's Republic*; Leo Strauss, "On Classical Political Philosophy", *Social Research*, 1945, pp. 98-117; E. A. Copeland, "The Institutional Setting of Plato's Republic"; *International Journal of Ethics*, Vol. XXXII, pp. 228-42; Rupert C. Lodge, "Plato and the Moral Standard", *Ibid*, Vol. XXXII, pp. 21-39, 193-211; Harward, *The Platonic Epistles*, specially the seventh letter.

## APPENDIX TWO

### *Culture and Democracy*

What distinguishes man from other living beings is the power of reflecting reason. By the help of reason he is able to fight against the alien forces of nature. The ubiquitous dominance of the powers of nature over living beings can only be resisted by the development and successful use of the rational faculty. But so long as mankind uses reason for manipulating, harnessing and controlling the forces of mechanical nature we are witnessing the growth only of civilization. Civilization indicates progress in the external and instrumentalistic arts of mankind. It is concerned with technical, scientific and industrial development. It is postulated on social, political and economic growth. Civilization is contrasted to primitivism, savagery and barbarism which are based on a bare and squalid economy of absolute scarcity. Civilization enables the production of at least some "surplus" which can be used to develop the technics and instruments of a more stable, satisfied and comfortable social existence. Hence civilization fosters the growth of a developed utilitarian civic existence. The phenomenal growth of modern scientific technology has enabled man to build up magnificent and wonderful creations in the realm of finished instruments of an utilitarian-pragmatic civilization. But when man employs his reason to go beyond mechanical excellence and physical dexterity and perfection and begins to chasten and ennable his feelings and sensibilities, he is said to be progressing in the department of culture. The field of civilizational growth is the rational control of the external environment of mechanical and physical nature and depends on an ever-growing knowledge of the chain of the concatenation of causal and correlational categories prevalent in the external universe. But culture postulates the organic growth of the inner human reason. It is based upon the inward-directedness of reason. When the rational faculty discriminates between

the good and the evil, the noble and the vulgar, the normative and the pragmatic, we may be said to be in the domain of rational culture. Hence while civilization primarily consists in a series of external instruments and artifacts, culture refers to inner growth of aesthetic and moral personality. This inner growth is fostered by the cultivation of the arts, literature, music and ethics. The noble creations of man embodied in the Mauryan, Guptan, Hellenic and Renaissance artistic representations in sculpture, architecture and painting, although based to a considerable extent on the successful manipulation of the materials of nature and to that extent pertaining to the domain of civilization, also try to embody in concrete visual shape some profound and primal elevated sentiments of man. Hence aesthetic creations are the manifestations of cultural development. But culture has to go beyond the provision for aesthetic delights. The achievements enshrined in the *Taj Mahal*, *Hamlet*, *Sakuntalam*, Ajanta paintings, the music of Beethoven and Bach are monumental but are not enough. Man has to go beyond aesthetics and he has to cultivate that integrated harmony of his impulses and propensities that can bring out an ethical regeneration and transformation of man. Hence moral creativism is also an essential ingredient of culture. The great saints, prophets and seers of humanity have emphasized the need of moral development. Only moral growth can lead to the successful conservation of human energy and power. In order that man may not bring havoc on himself and his kind by running wild and riotous with his unregenerate impulses and transient tempestuous flights, it is necessary that he should be habituated in the performance of rationally justifiable and morally worthy actions. Hence the essence of culture lies not merely in aesthetic growth but aesthetic growth should be accompanied by the recognition of the sublimity and dignity of the personality of human being and an awareness of the inward freedom, creativeness and compassion of the moral self. In Mughal India there were great creations in the realm of art, painting and literature but they were not accompanied by a training of the rulers and the subject in *vrata* and *tapas* and *sila* and the result was the universal decline of the 18th century. Hence a true concept of culture can only be defined as the

growth of rational faculty oriented not merely to artistic but also to ethical achievements. Thus interpreted, culture represents a goal of integral realization and would require sustained endeavors for its attainment rather than being a realized actuality and entity.<sup>1</sup> Hence we can say that culture consists in

<sup>1</sup> Hegel, *The Phenomenology of Mind*, pp. 514-17 : "The means, then, whereby an individual gets objective validity and concrete actuality here is the formative process of Culture. The estrangement on the part of spirit from its natural existence is here the individual's true and original nature, his very substance. The relinquishment of this natural state is, therefore, both his purpose and his mode of existence ; it is at the same time the mediating process, the transition of the thought-constituted substance to concrete actuality, as well as, conversely, the transition of determinate individuality to its essential constitution. This individuality moulds itself by culture to what it inherently is, and only by so doing is it then something *per se* and possessed of concrete existence. The extent of its culture is the measure of its reality and its power.....That which, in reference to the single individual, appears as his culture, is the essential moment of spiritual substance as such, viz., the direct transition of its ideal thought-constituted, universality into actual reality ; or otherwise put, culture is the single soul of this substance, in virtue of which the essentially inherent (*An sich*) becomes something explicitly acknowledged, and assumes definite objective existence. The process in which an individuality cultivates itself is, therefore, *ipso facto*, the development of individuality *qua* universal objective being ; that is to say, it is the development of the actual world. This world, although it has come into being by means of individuality, is in the eyes of self-consciousness something that is directly and primarily estranged, and, for self-consciousness, takes on the form of a fixed, undisturbed reality. But at the same time self-consciousness is sure this is its own substance, and proceeds to take it under control. This power over its substance it acquires by culture, which, looked at from this aspect, appears as self-consciousness making itself conform to reality, and doing so to the extent permitted by the energy of its original character and talents. What seems here to be the individual's power and force, bringing the substance under it, and thereby doing away with that substance is the same thing as the actualization of the substance. For the power of the individual consists in conforming itself to that substance, i.e., in emptying itself of

the growth of *samskaras*. According to the Buddhist philosophy, *samskara* plays a vital part in the personality of man. It is a prominent ingredient of the human personality according to the other systems of Hindu thought. Artistic creations should also aim at the development of the moral personality or *sattvika samskara* of man. The Greeks equated culture with the educational attainments of man (*paideia*) but we have to bear in mind that according to the Greek idealism education did not mean mere instruction but signified the development of the faculties of the soul and the exercise of contemplative and virtuous activity. Culture, thus, in a broad sense is equated with the process of "becoming" and growth of man in quest of the realization of hierarchically arranged system of values. Hence culture points to an ethical and axiological ontology.

Democracy is generally regarded as a political ideal aiming at the vindication of the ultimate political power and authority of the mass of the population. In older times, in Greece, it was possible for the entire populace to deliberate upon and decide the fundamental issues of war and peace, and law-making. The eighteenth century theorists sponsored the sovereignty of the nation or of the people. Lincoln dreamt of a government of the people, by the people and for the people. But due to the growth of representative mechanisms and the enormously complicated character of modern political and economic policies it is not possible now for the people to participate directly in the formation, interpretation and execution of policies. The rigidity of party system has brought into prominence the importance of leaders and the art of management of opinion, propaganda and publicity. In the vast democratic areas of today, the sovereignty of the people does not mean the constant and dynamic exercise of political power by them but only represents the generally accepted view that the fundamental outlines of political policies should have the broad acceptance of the people or at least of the electorate. Democracy postulates today only that the political rulers of a

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its own self, and thus establishing itself as the objectively existing substance. Its culture and its own reality are, therefore, the process of making the substance itself actual and concrete."

country should be rooted in the dominant stream of the cultural and historical heritage of the population and should not do anything radically alien to the aspirations, will and ideals of the people. It means that political power has to be rooted in the culture of the community.

The essence of democracy is liberty.<sup>1</sup> Adequate and impartial representation, vindication of public opinion, development of at least a dual party system and leadership, judicial review, the supremacy of the legislature over the executive, the subordination of the military authorities to the civil authorities, and general, established and promulgated laws are only the diverse technics fashioned by human ingenuity to realize the philosophy of liberty. Liberty is the essence of man and in order that man may be an end into himself and not the slave of somebody else's whims, it is necessary that he should have the liberty to contribute his share to the formation of those fundamental policies that shape his life and his country's destiny.<sup>2</sup> Liberty

<sup>1</sup> Aristotle considers freedom or *Eleutheria* to be the main criterion for distinguishing a democratic from an oligarchical form of government. Lecky, the British historian, took a totally antithetical view, on the basis of the practices of democratic governments. He says in his book, *Democracy and Liberty*, "Democracy insures neither better government nor greater liberty; indeed some of the strongest democratic tendencies are adverse to liberty. On the contrary, strong arguments may be adduced both from history and from the nature of things to show that democracy may often prove the direct opposite of liberty."

<sup>2</sup> B. Bosanquet, *The Philosophical Theory of the State*, pp. 135-36 : "It is because we know, however indefinitely, that our self has a reach beyond its daily needs, that arbitrary oppression becomes a thing to be resisted at the price of life itself. Herbert Spencer draws attention to the struggles of an animal which we try to confine, as a proof of the innate feeling of liberty. But the domesticated animal is the highest animal, or at any rate not the lowest; while the man domesticated on similar terms is what we call a slave, because he has sold his liberty for his life. It is therefore in truth the sense of the higher liberty—the greatness and unity of life—that has communicated uncontrollable force to the claim for the lower; and if the fuller meaning is the reality and the lesser the symbol, it would be nearer the truth to say that the reality is the liberty of a moral being

can be realized only when man is given the opportunity to develop his personality by acting, as far as possible, without hindrances and impediments to his moral path. Liberty, thus, is essential to the growth of man.<sup>1</sup> Democracy wants to realize the inherent natural right of man to shape his destiny. Thus it is clear that democratic liberty is ultimately founded upon a fundamental philosophic faith. Men are not *actually* equal either by nature or by the quantitative measurement of their attainments. But still democratic liberty inculcates one vote to every man. This is necessarily founded upon the faith that man, *qua* man is equal. This is only an implicit recognition of the religious faith that all men are created qualitatively equal by God. Hence although in modern conditions democracy connotes mainly a political mechanism, it has to transform itself into a philosophic and religious outlook for its integral realization. It wants to develop the political personality of a man. But personality is a unity and it can only be developed if there is the total expansion of the being of man. Every man must be provided the means to develop his unique, distinct and unrepeatable personality. In the absence of such means he will become "a fragment of a man" and not an integral person.

Hence it appears that the fundamental philosophic idealism behind both culture and democracy is the same. They who interpret culture only in aesthetic terms and democracy only in political terms are being unjust to both. Integral culture signifies the harmonious development and perfection of the

whose will finds adequate expression in its life, of which liberty the absence of external constraint is only an elementary type or symbol."

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Harold J. Laski, *Liberty in the Modern State*, p. 47 : "...those to whom freedom matters...have the right to emphasize that, if liberty is stricken, the conquests of science over nature are inhibited at every turn...They will require the self-control that gives rein to the heart, only as it is guided by the mind. They will need philosophy as well as faith daring not less than patience. It is the glory of freedom that it brings these qualities to those who serve it with fidelity. Before now, it has transformed a prison into an altar. Before now, it has brought the light of unconquerable hope into places that seemed utterly dark."

inner rational nature of man which is equated with aesthetic, moral and spiritual growth. Democracy also has to pass beyond the realm of politics and become a philosophy of life oriented to fundamental equalitarianism. It is based on the neutralization of the audacious pretensions of the vested interests and it inculcates an attitude of widespread sympathy, reciprocity, tolerance, equity and humility. Thus it is clear that both culture and democracy fundamentally aim at the same thing—the expansion and extension of the human personality and the vindication of its moral rights.

But there have been several critics who consider culture and democracy to be antithetical. Culture, they consider to be, the art of successful symbolization of the highest values of life. This difficult art is possible only for an intellectual elite. Democracy with its cult of the mediocre, the average, the normal, the mass, and the all, is regarded as opposed to philosophic ingenuity, to intellectual subtlety and in general to higher creations of the human mind.<sup>1</sup> It considers them speculative, hair-splitting argumentations of the arm-chair apologists of the leisure class. The supreme champion of philosophic scientific dialectical culture—Plato—was, hence, bitterly opposed to the rigid equalitarianism, the social perversities, and the identification of liberty and license that one finds in democracy. Contemplation, either of the archetypal, immutable, eternal ideas, or meditative reflection on the activity of God was the ideal of the Greek philosophers and consequently they thought the masses to be either the 'huge brute', or composed of naturally evil and wicked men who could only be made temperate and law-abiding by a political superior and hence not being capable of the highest culture. Aristotle is considerably more sympathetic to democracy than Plato and advocates the ideal of every man ruling and being ruled in turn and also upholds the formula of the union of democracy and oligarchy. But even he upholds that the absolutely highest political ideal is represented either by an

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<sup>1</sup> According to De Tocqueville, Laveleye, Bluntschli, Maine and Treitschke, democracy is opposed to the development of literature, art and science.

ideal royalty or by an aristocracy of the virtuous few. Sometimes it said that masses being untrained are bound to neglect cultural values. The great development of German philosophy from Leibniz to Schopenhauer was not made in a democratic age. The days of Weimar democracy were culturally and philosophically almost barren. But this is not a very sound argument. It is very true that Homer, Thales, Democritus, Vyasa, Valmiki, Kalidasa, Samkara and Dante are not the products of a democratic period of social life. But nevertheless, we do find some very successful intellectual productions in the fifth-century Athens which was an age of the growth of democracy. Moreover, it is no argument to establish a correlation between cultural growth and the absence of democracy. Historical contemporaneity of culture and royalty or aristocracy does not indicate any logical connexion between them. The periods of Assyrian, Mongol and Turko-Afghan royalties or the city-state of Carthage, inspite of the fact that they were not democracies, did not create any astonishing splendors in the creative arts. There is no law of the emergence of genius. Political and economic conditions do not generate geniuses. Aquinas and Dante were born in feudal Europe. But there can be no explanation as to why they were born only amidst the feudal conditions of Italy and not of France. Hence historical parallelism or connexion cannot be traced between the absence of democracy and the advancement of culture.

Democracy, as I see it, is fundamentally a moral philosophy. The political mechanisms of representative democracy cannot work unless there is behind them the support of religious ideals. By religion I do not mean transcendentalism and eschatology. But by stressing the significance of religious values for democracy I want to emphasize the genuine perception of a super-individual goal. So long as man is engaged in subserving egoistic and selfish ends, the mere external changes in the institutional structures will not suffice. It is necessary also to bring about the moral redemption and transfiguration of man. Since the times of Pythagoras, Buddha and Plato down to Gandhi and Aurobindo, thinkers and seers have said that no institutional change without a transformation of the human

heart can bring about social and political deliverance. The heyday of bourgeois democracy and capitalism under the framework of the modern nation-states has been marked by the formation of a vast number of institutions intended to create the millennium. But some of the greatest institutional and associational experiments of man like the Second and Third Internationals, the League of Nations, the United Nations, the Roman Catholic Church and others have not succeeded in going much farther in the solution of our problems. The transformation of the millennialistic and moral aspirations of Russian communism into the propaganda-cult of a powerful totalitarian state are enough to convince mankind that changes in the external structures are never adequate. Man is not merely a physical mechanism and organism but a creature gifted with irreplaceable and incomparable capabilities, moral and spiritual perceptions. Hence any change to be lasting and permanent, should touch the inner being and soul of man.<sup>1</sup> Democracy is a vast *Yajna*—

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Jacques Maritain, *Freedom in the Modern World*, pp. 135-36 : "Péguy used to say that the social revolution will be a moral revolution or it will not be at all. To wish to change the face of the earth without first changing one's heart (which no man can do of his own strength) is to undertake a work that is purely destructive. Perhaps indeed if omnipotent love did truly transform our hearts, the exterior work of reform would already be half done. All this shows, it would seem, that it is better to be revolutionary than to call oneself a revolutionary and especially at a time when the Revolution has become the most conventional of commonplaces and a title that is claimed by men of every kind. To disown this name might conceivably be a useful act of 'revolutionary courage'. In any case "the rupture between the Christian order and the established disorder" has to do not only with things in the economic or the political order but with the whole range of culture, with the relation of the spiritual and the temporal orders and even with the conception we ought to have of the work of man here below and at this moment in the history of the world. It has to do not only with the external and visible order of human life ; it has to do also and primarily with its spiritual bases. The rupture will become manifest in external things, in the visible and tangible order. But it is an ineluctable condition that it should fulfil itself first in the intellect and heart of those who wish to be co-workers with God in history ; and that

it is out to bring about a gigantic upheaval in the historical structure. It aims to develop the hidden potentialities of every citizen and wants the realization of the common good by the voluntary, cooperative, spontaneous and enlightened efforts of all the citizens. Its objective is not to impose a virtuous regime on the citizens but to develop the inherent personal qualities and creative essence of every citizen. This can only be done by making every citizen alert, active and vigilant politically. But more and more I am becoming convinced that even for political success we need a moral renaissance. It is possible to change a political system by organized resistance and revolution but until the leaders of the new regime are better men, we will merely replace one set of corrupt governors by a different set. Thereby we do not get out of the vicious circle. History teaches us the lesson that the moral prowess and charisma of the great prophets have brought about tremendous transformations in the lives of men. The examples of Buddha and Christ testify to the autonomous force of the moral power of great souls to bring about great action on the field of history. Democracy is in need of this moral force. Thus we see that both democracy and culture require moral fervor for their growth.

Democracy aims at the incorporation of the available amount of reason and wisdom in the political process. It cannot afford to neglect even the man in the lowest substratum of life. It is based on the religious belief in the equality of all human beings. Hence we see that democracy is a great and unique experiment in the social history of man. It aims to enshrine the rational autonomy of man. Thus reason is the substantial entity which has to be cultivated for the furtherance both of the democratic process and of culture. So far, in human history, authoritarianism, scholastic dogmatism and clericalism, sacerdotalism and fanatical obscurantism have often been dominant. It is only in modern times and specially since 1789 that the critical reason has been applied to an investigation of social and political processes. This has resulted in the stress on rights of man, constitutionalism and democracy,

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they should appreciate it in its proper fulness and depth of meaning.

economic equality and social justice. Democratic idealism and rationalism have resulted in the formulation of the view that culture is a right of man. By the mere fact of being born in a human society, man is entitled to the right to enjoy the fruits of cultural heritage. Democracy is based on the belief in human reason and its creative powers, and rational creativism is not possible until reason is chastened and ennobled by participating in the accumulated heritage of human culture.

Democracy thus generates the belief in culture as a right. It is based on the hope that it is possible so to educate people that they may be in a position to achieve so much of initial experience that they can share in the greatest creations of man. Democracy certainly does not share the absurd belief that under this system the average man will be transformed into an Aristotle. So far as the creative side of culture is concerned, only the great geniuses will create mighty epics and magnificent art. But when I am pleading the cause of "democratization of culture" I only want to emphasize that the vast masses of mankind should be given an opportunity to enrich their lives.<sup>1</sup> Not a mere self-satisfied existence of vegetative and appetitive gratifications should be considered the sufficient aim

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<sup>1</sup> Nicolas Berdyaev, *Slavery and Freedom*, p. 124 : "It is of great importance that we should define the inter-relations which exist between the aristocratic and the democratic principles in culture. Culture is founded upon the aristocratic principle, upon the principle of qualitative selection. The creativeness of culture in all spheres struggles towards perfection, towards the attainment of the highest quality. It is so in knowledge, it is so in art, it is so in the working out of nobility of soul, and in the culture of human feelings. Truth, beauty, right and love do not depend upon quantity ; they are qualities. The aristocratic principle of selection forms a cultured elite, a spiritual aristocracy. But the cultured elite cannot remain confined within itself, isolated, self-affirming, in its fear that it may become remote from the sources of life ; the power to create may become exhausted in its fear of degeneration and death. All forms of aristocracy which are embodied in a group inevitably degenerate and wither away. It is true that the creativeness of cultural values cannot be spread all at once among the unqualitative mass of mankind, but nevertheless the process of the democratization of culture cannot fail to take place."

of an utilitarian life. Democracy wants to create the conditions of a decent, honourable and dignified life for every citizen. Some of the critics of democratization of culture say that this process will necessarily result in decline because it will raise the inferior and commonplace canons of the multitude to the exalted plane of the determinants of all great creations. Thereby it will mean the destruction of all originality and plasticity and will lead to the supremacy of the Procrustean and stupefying canons of an incompetent and untrained multitude. I see some point in this warning but I am not pessimistic. I believe that the same idealism that has transformed slavery and serfdom into partial democracy will also be a bar against cultural submergence. At several periods in Indian history we find that poets misused their genius by flattering their political patrons. Democracy at least will be a guard against such exploitation of intellect. The very existence of democracy is a guarantee that if by any intellectual creation some type of public social good will result, such creation will be given the amount of patronage that it deserves.

Democracy is a guarantee to culture in another sense also. The existence of political democracy is the bulwark for the preservation of the integrity of the diverse and distinct traditions of the various ethnic and cultural groups. Democratic rationalism is opposed to cultural suppression. Democracy is opposed to political dictation in the fields of spirit and culture. It cannot tolerate that any politician should pronounce in the field of cultural and mental growth. In several democratic constitutions of the world we are now finding special safeguards and provisions for preserving the cultural traditions of the several minorities. The argument behind this is not merely to deny the rampant power of the majority to control the minority. The reason is more fundamental. Democracy, although an integral moral outlook and world-view, is postulated on the separation of the several organized departments of life. When a sphere of life and activities becomes sufficiently externalized and generalized, it becomes organized into an autonomous sphere. Democracy is founded on the belief that political power should meddle only with those spheres which touch the common life of citizens as a whole. It is opposed to the con-

cept of political "coordination" as advocated by the theorists of totalitarian regimes. It thinks that only those aspects which involve the problem of peace, security, economic exchange and general welfare should be under the control of political powers. The spheres of religion, morality, art and culture can be rightly and properly developed only when there is a spirit of spontaneity and autonomy. Political action is based on the mechanism of instruction, advice, promulgation and establishment of laws but in the last resort, the state as the organization of dominance is bound to use force and violence if its wishes are not respected. In the nature of the case political interference is not desirable in the spheres of religion, ethics and culture. Only when organized groups and associations united for fostering religion, art and culture make unnecessary interference with the canons of established social existence, is the state justified in vindicating its character as the Leviathan with a mighty sceptre in its hands. But otherwise democracy has acted very wisely in demarcating the spheres of different realms. It is inherent in the logic of this process that culture should not be tampered with by the all-engrossing interfering hands of the bureaucracy that wants to destroy originality in the name of routine, rational stability and efficiency. Only democratic training in the natural right of creative citizenship can impart to the citizen that sense of moral responsibility and fearlessness whereby he can oppose the obstructions of the bureaucracy in the path of culture.

But in order to be genuine and constantly creative, both culture and democracy have to be strongly rooted in sound economic foundations. Democracy stresses the growth of political liberty but it is true that a famished and starved population cannot enjoy the liberties provided in the constitution. Lack of economic facilities and provisions means the denial of opportunities to the people who could develop into noble and worthy citizens. Hence democracy which is a vast *Tajna* to develop the personalities of the people must try to create such a situation which will enable the greatest number of the citizens to make their lives better, richer and nobler and in a position to render their effective contributions to the realization of common, rational and social good. Culture in the course of

the centuries builds up almost a super-individual character. It assumes the nature of an autonomous reality. In order that the citizens be enabled to share in the creations and achievements of culture it is necessary that the economic standard of the masses be raised up. Only when the absolute physical and economic necessities of men have been satisfied can they be in a position to enjoy culture.<sup>1</sup>

But the construction of such a society, which can provide the external conditions of an economic betterment to all citizens, and thereby enable them to take part in the political processes of a democratic government and to enjoy the rich heritage of culture, is only possible by the aid of science. An economy of scarcity cannot create a society of abundance. If poverty and want are to be eliminated from society, only science can come to our rescue. Science makes possible the augmentation of social capital by the acceleration of productive powers. Hence science has to strengthen the material foundations both of culture and democracy. In the olden days people were dependent on chance inventions and sporadic discoveries. But modern civilization is based upon a systematic pursuit of rational powers of men. Only scientific production can make possible the fulfilment of the greatest needs of the greatest number of people. This linking up of science, culture and democracy means that we no longer associate culture with moral austerity. According to the political thought of the Bible, Buddhism and Plato, political power should be divested of the accumulative propensity if it is to serve its purpose adequately in an enlightened way. Hence it has been regarded necessary to live in a style of austerity and simplicity. But science makes possible the increase in the standard of living of

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. Harold J. Laski, *Liberty in the Modern State* (London, 1948), pp. 17-18 : "An interest in liberty begins when men have ceased to be overwhelmed by the problem of sheer existence ; it is when they have a chance of leisure, the opportunity to reflect upon their situation, in a degree which, if small, is nevertheless real, to recognize that they need not helplessly accept the routine in which, before, they seemed hopelessly immersed. Economic sufficiency and leisure for thought—these are the primary conditions of the free-man."

the vast millions and hence the criterion of austerity and simplicity itself will undergo a change. Even today what may be considered a simple and ordinary standard of living in the U.S.A. will be considered exaggerated and extravagant in India. What is considered a simple style of living is itself subject to changes in the process of historical growth and economic development. Hence science makes possible a transformation of the older notions of equating culture with simplicity and asceticism. It has opened up before man new visions of a vastly more prosperous future because it fosters the growth of technological efficiency and rationality. Science is based on intellectual inventiveness and skill and it leads to the advancement of the power of man because it enables him to control and predict the processes of nature. Hence science creates those conditions whereby man can lead a pleasant and comfortable life and enjoy culture and develop his political personality.

But science and technology, economics and commerce, political stability and peace do not exhaust the creative possibilities of the individual. The individual is not a mere political cell of the community. He has a distinct personality of his own. His own unrepeatable uniqueness has to be preserved. There is the possibility that in the enormously vast and complicated structure of the modern technological and industrial civilizations man may lose his autonomy and be disintegrated into the mere soulless "fragment of a man". Hence it is essential to stress the uniqueness of the integral moral personality of man because otherwise there is the danger that the enormous complexity of the modern mechanical processes may cramp the moral sublimity and elevation of the human person. Science is a great force. It can be used both for creation and destruction. In order that scientific appliances may not be used to blast the cultural creations of man, we need the religious spirit of faith in the spirit of man and his creation. The religious spirit is necessary as the rock on which to establish the foundations of scientific growth. We have witnessed the destructive aspects of science. Science is a vast and gigantic network of power and force and energy and unless it is harnessed to a religious spirit of self-abnegation and dedication to a noble cause it cannot be of service to man. Democracy is a noble

and difficult ideal. So many weaknesses creep in it because it is such an arduous enterprise. But if democracy is to develop the natural right and liberty of man, if a substantial degree of economic equality is to be realized and if social and economic justice are to be realized for all, it is absolutely essential that a moral spirit for the quest of cultural values should pervade mankind. No great work has ever been achieved without a spirit of dedication and self-devotion. Hence if the spirit of democracy has to succeed it is indispensable that the citizens should be inspired by a spirit of conquest of egoistic and lustful propensities. Unless moral democracy becomes a matter of general world-view it is not possible even to realize political democracy. Only religion which teaches the transience of worldly passions and satisfactions can generate in man the necessary spirit of self-control and self-abnegation which are needed to make possible great sacrifices in achieving the victories of culture and democracy. A philosophy of culture and democratic freedom based merely on social and conventional expediency or on pragmatic rules of the game will land mankind in disaster. The Greek Sophists had attempted to base justice and law on convention. But against them, Plato pointed out that justice is a virtue of the soul of man. If expediency, pragmatic conventions and temporary rules of success become the determinants of action, then we leave the way open to opportunism, competition and moral instability. Expediency eventually culminates in egoism and also in fascism. Whatever brings success becomes the norm and criterion of action. In such a condition there is no stable kingdom of moral values. The quest of temporary success destroys the integration of personality. Only when man accepts the ontology of axiological structure provided by moral and spiritual culture, and only when he is willing to allow others the liberal and democratic right of enjoying the heritage of culture equally with himself, can he be said to have grown in the awareness of the sanctity and worth of the human personality. But the acceptance of an axiological cultural ontology and democratic means can be postulated only upon a fundamental spirit of religious devotion to the good and the true. Such a synthetic integral perspective

of religion as a cohesive force is needed for an adequate development of culture and for the realization of democracy not only as a political formula but in the diverse domains of human existence. This does represent a distant prospect of a millennialistic vision but we can begin the journey today and now.

## APPENDIX THREE

### *Spiritual Freedom*

One of the fundamental and distinctive characteristics of man is freedom. The material universe presents the spectacle of fixity, rigidity, density and immobility and wherever there is movement it appears as the impulsion of an external impetus or of a powerful natural force and energy. The plant and the animal worlds do not have freedom although the latter have some partial liberty of action. Compared to the plant and the animal worlds man has freedom but that is not enough. As a baby and as a child, one is completely helpless and entirely dependent on others. During adolescence a person dreams of mighty ambitious projects but soon when he has to face the grave problems of the world he gives way to despair. Age makes a man tame and he craves for adjustment with the world and for peace and security. The early spirit of rebellion and assertion seems to ebb away with the advance of years. Old age reveals to him the necessity of a psychological leaning on the higher powers and therefore he begins a search for trans-terrestrial values and goals—God, freedom, immortality, bliss, supreme saving gnosis and knowledge, cosmic consciousness etc. From the above description of the psychological transformation of man that I have given, it may appear that the desire for freedom is more or less an intermittent ambition of the earlier years in a person's life and the chances of its realization are almost absent in face of the stupendous power of natural necessity, social insecurity and the final disaster of death. Even the collective enterprises of mankind seem destined for the same inevitable fate of extinction. Gone are Alexander, Hannibal, Caesar and Hitler, and obliterated from the face of the earth are the great Pharonic kingdoms, the Sumerian and the Semitic cultures of Babylonia, the civilizations of Crete and Lydia and the splendors of Athens, Rome and Carthage. Only colossal nihilism generated by eternal time, supreme in its

indifference to the fate of man, is the dark blind reality trying to smother what may temporarily appear as gigantic creations of the restless Faustian spirit. In this dismal context is not freedom a Utopia ?

The stamp of an anti-human unconscious power, a cosmic force of annihilation that pulverises all the efforts of man and reveals to him the pettiness, paltriness, insignificance and the emptiness of his dreams and actions is writ large upon the face of the universe. This portentous power of negativity is called Maya in the philosophy of Vedanta. Maya is the power of God, it is a cosmic power that energizes and creates the world and eventually hurls it into the abyss of annihilation. Man has to conform to the dictates of this divine Maya or the Yogamaya (or the Kala) of the *Bhagavadgita* and only by her grace he can attain to divine being and then the cosmos would either vanish for him or assume a transformed appearance. The world will lose its nihilistic and destructive character, and the man of realization will be free. Spiritual freedom, in the Vedantic context, means the attainment of a transcendent consciousness. The empirical world is relative, phenomenal and full of contradictions. In the later schools of subjectivistic Vedanta it is even conceived as illusory like the rope mistaken for a serpent or like the fairy-land of Gandharvas. Spiritual freedom, in the Vedantic view, implies the transcendence of this world and the attainment of Mukti or Nirvana. We will not debate at this point upon the question of Nirvana being either a positive status or total extinction.<sup>1</sup> Buddha taught that the cosmos was full of disease, death, despair and destruction and hence inculcated the necessity of ethical enlightenment. Some of the Christian teachers, philosophers and mystics also speak of divine illumination and transformed consciousness. The basic point in this conception is that freedom is conceived as not possible of being attained by the empirical man in the context of the natural universe and hence he (man) has to turn inwards and realize the subliminal depths and spiritual heights. In this sense of a transcendent consciousness, the gospel of spiritual

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<sup>1</sup> V. P. Varma, "Nirvana in Early Buddhist Philosophy," *The Maha Bodhi* (Calcutta), July 1960.

freedom, we find taught especially in Vedantism and in the positivistic schools of Mahayana Buddhism. The reality of a transcendent consciousness has been affirmed even by modern mystics like Vivekananda, Ramatirtha and Aurobindo. As is evident, this transcendent consciousness is a matter of subjective realization. As an intellectual I do not find this concept available for large-scale socialization and generalization. Even if it be a truth of super-mind and super-nature it is meant for a few mystic souls. If somehow the transcendent reality could be conceived as a moral being and as vitally interested in my life and my destiny, I may find this gospel attractive. For myself, my life and destiny are supremely important. I do not feel exultant at the prospects of a non-human transcendent consciousness but even if it may appear a little paradoxical I will relish the idea of transcendent-moral being interested in human welfare whom I can realize through and in my own consciousness.

Sometimes the gospel of a transcendent consciousness appears a little too remote and idealistic. Hence some teachers inculcate the theory of a cosmic consciousness. Limitation, death, desire, incapacity, frustration, despair, disease and constancy of want are the main reasons which hinder a man's freedom. They proceed from his ego. A man has forgotten his natural heritage, his cosmic patrimony and has identified himself with the body and the mind. This has resulted in an alienation and estrangement from the spirit. Spiritual freedom means the attainment of a cosmic consciousness. If there is an expansion and extension of the empirical consciousness there will be the dawn of a large awareness, what Sri Aurobindo called "self-awareness and cosmic awareness". The real culprit is the human ego, the blundering individualizing consciousness that creates the appearance of bondage. So far as the attainment of this consciousness is concerned, sometimes it appears that it is consequent on a spiritual opening and unfoldment. But perhaps there is a more human way to attain it—through the purification of emotions and feelings and also through the media of artistic and poetic creation and appreciation, it is possible to attain that. Robert Blake and Rabindranath Tagore and sometimes even Wordsworth speak of a poetic realizability of

cosmic consciousness. Kant referred to the presence of a general and universal element in the moments of aesthetic perceptions and Hegel thought that art was a moment of the absolute spirit. The concept of a cosmic consciousness appears inspiring to me but I feel that perhaps I do not have the emotional and the volitional accomplishments and gifts necessary for the realization of this consciousness. Hence as an intellectual, here also I feel rebuffed.

A third type of spiritual freedom is inculcated in the Samkhya philosophy. The operations of a mechanical nature are responsible for all the actions and sufferings in the world. The transparent *Purusha* has forgotten his immutable pure luminous self-knowledge and has, by the force of ignorance and in conscience, associated and merged himself with *Prakriti*. Hegel conceives of immersion into nature (with the consequent absence of the knowledge of spirit as freedom) to be the cause of the absence of freedom in the Oriental civilizations of China, India and Persia. The subject or the *Purusha* is advised by the Samkhya to progressively dissociate himself from associations with *Prakriti*. But even this Samkhya gospel of spiritual freedom does not appear completely satisfying to me. Anthropology, social psychology especially of the behavioristic school, and historical sociology bring forward the concept of the social self.<sup>1</sup> 'My' and 'I' are also considered to be social emergents. There is nothing like an abstract singular 'I'. There is an 'I' only in relation to society. Only in my struggles and processes of adjustment against and with nature and society, am I conscious of myself as a spiritual agent and creative subject. Nature is not completely separate from me. I am a part of nature. The concerted efforts of man have changed the face of nature during the centuries of historical evolution and, as Karl Marx teaches, in changing external nature man also transforms his own human nature. In the light of the modern social sciences and their researches, the Vedantic-Samkhya process of progressive de-individualization or isolation appears to be an abstract gospel.

A fourth variant of the gospel of spiritual freedom appears

<sup>1</sup>. Cf. the writings of G. H. Mead.

in German Idealism. Kant, Fichte and Hegel accepted the creative role of the human subject in the epistemological process. German metaphysical idealism conceives the subject (not the empirical ego but the transcendental ego) or the spirit as freedom. Hegel thought that a determinate self-conscious realization and acceptance of the universality and actuality of *Sittlichkeit* (ethical substance) amounted to freedom. He wanted to replace the diremption (separation) of consciousness by a synthetic approach. From German idealism, Marx derived the principle of the human subject as a contributory factor in the process of knowledge. According to Marx, the end of the reign of necessity is consequent upon a dialectical knowledge of the processes of nature and society. Dialectics is not merely a body of positive knowledge but also is the key for the rationalization of social and economic processes. The expropriation of the expropriators by the revolutionary organizations of the proletariat and the augmentation of social capital and its equitable distribution would lead to the release of the suppressed energies of man. Hence Marxists think that communism will end the pre-historic period of necessity and begin the period of freedom. But time has revealed the barbaric, brutal and aggressive shape of militant communism.

We find three approaches to the problem of the conquest of necessity which is the stark reality of external nature. According to the Gita, mechanical necessity can be conquered by a spiritual realization. Nature will become a passive externality if a man becomes a conscious instrument (*nimitta*) of the spiritual being. According to Hegel, political freedom is realized in the state which is the divine idea on earth and the perfect actuality of rationality. Spirit as freedom is realized, according to Hegel, by philosophical cognition. Hence both the Gita and Hegel accept that some form of knowledge—spiritual realization or dialectics—is the way to the attainment of freedom. Marx teaches a secularized materialistic version of the Hegelian formula. But inspite of totally divergent presuppositions, the Gita, Hegel and Marx are united on one point—all three of them teach that the mechanical necessity of external nature can be conquered and eliminated only by superior knowledge. I agree with Marx to the extent that the

latter teaches that by the growing incorporation of scientific knowledge in the comprehension and arrangement of natural and social processes man can realize freedom. To take a concrete example—disease. The character of necessity that formerly applied to disease has been partially eliminated by the growth of medical science. But if the followers of Marx think that dialectical knowledge can totally eliminate necessity they are Utopian. The blind cosmic forces that keep man under subjection are perhaps too powerful. I am not preaching pessimism but am only emphasizing the immanent limitation of knowledge. We can, for example, conquer to a great extent disease but cannot eliminate death.

Sometimes the word spiritual also comprehends the moral and the ethical. At times the spiritual and the ethical are identified. Absolute idealism whether it be of Vedanta, Bradley, Bosanquet or Aurobindo teaches that the ultimate reality is not constituted on ethical patterns. Ethics is a creation of the human mind and is relevant to our universe. But if we do not pursue this metaphysical distinction between the spiritual and the moral, we often find that spiritual freedom means ethical freedom. In this sense spiritual freedom means a disciplined rational and moral life. Hence we can take the conception of control of passions and emotions as the fifth meaning of spiritual freedom. Socrates and Plato taught that virtue is knowledge. According to Plato, the philosophical comprehension of the whole, attained by the knowledge of the mathematical sciences which find their culmination in the philosophical concept of the Idea of the Good can make possible the adequate practice of justice which is the foundation and basis of knowledge, courage and balanced appetitic satisfactions. Plato always emphasizes the necessity of self-restraint. Aristotle is the philosopher of moderation—the doctrine of the ethical mean. Stoicism teaches control over passions. Rousseau thinks that only control of passions can lead to the growth of moral liberty. Enshrinement of liberty means being truly one's self, according to Bosanquet, and a man can be his true self only by control of temporary passions. In European ethics, we find the Spinozistic-Kantian gospel of constraint over passions as the way to liberty. Spinoza completely denied freedom of will

in the metaphysical domain but stood for a rational control of emotions. Since the *Rigveda* onwards, Indian thought has championed the cause of *Dharma*, *Vrata*, *Rita*, the Eightfold way of the Buddhists, the *Yamas* and *Niyamas* of Patanjali's Yoga and the *Sadhana Chatustaya* of the Vedanta. In modern India, Tagore, Gandhi and Aurobindo advocate the conception of spiritual freedom as founded upon restraint. Tagore's conception of "the religion of man" refers to the emergence of the universal man—a possibility which can be realized only by the elimination of lust and passion. Tagore condemned Western nationalism as organized mechanical wanton aggressiveness and hoped that perhaps the emancipation of man would come by active acceptance of Eastern teachings. So far, the concept of truth was conceived only as an ethical category. Gandhi absolutized this notion and taught a concept of truth as ultimate reality. According to Aurobindo, the desire for liberty is implanted by God in man. Freedom means obedience to the laws of one's real being which is the same as the cosmic spiritual being. The conceptualization of freedom in terms of obedience is a secularization of Christianity and is found in Hobbes, Rousseau and Bosanquet.<sup>1</sup> Aurobindo's theory shows the influence of the *Bhagavadgita* which teaches conformity to one's *svadharma*. Although control of passions has been the supreme ethical teaching of Indian philosophy and thought and has been preached perhaps in India more than in the West, still I feel that the peculiar theoretical formulation that freedom depends on control of passions and in obedience to the laws of one's being is indicative of Western influence on modern Indian thinkers.<sup>2</sup> To modern intellectuals this conception will appear plausible. Every sensitive man can experience a sense of power and freedom in leading a life of restraint. Unregenerate sensual and hedonistic life leads to ultimate dissolution and exhaustion. A life of restraint does bestow physical, vital and mental vigor and these in turn generate freedom. Absolute freedom is a poetic dream but one certainly can attain partial freedom by a life of self-control and discipline. The moralizing

<sup>1</sup> For detailed investigation into this problem see V. P. Varma, *The Political Philosophy of Sri Aurobindo*, pp. 377-79.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

role of social codes, conventions and communal formulas has been accepted not only by metaphysicians like Aristotle, Hegel and Bradley but also by modern social psychologists and sociologists. Sometimes external moral norms become inwardized as canons of personal action and this helps the process of socialization of man. I do agree with Kant and German idealists in thinking that mere freedom or free action is not enough. It is necessary to obtain the self-consciousness of freedom. Self-consciousness is the characteristic of freedom as distinguished from the acceptance of mere external obligations and conformity. I think that this ethical conception of spiritual freedom not only can help man in re-shaping his life but has also a very great social significance.

Sometimes spiritual freedom is also used to mean intellectual freedom. The subtle distinction between the mind and the spirit—*Manas* and *Atman*—that we find in the Vedantic philosophy is not found in Hellenic thought where the *psyche* stands for both. Of course, European metaphysics does distinguish between the psychic and the cosmic spirit but perhaps the distinction between the spiritual and the mental is not very elaborately marked out in European thought. Oftentimes when political scientists and sociologists speak of spiritual freedom they mean intellectual freedom. When a materialist and atheist like Lenin says that religion leads to spiritual degradation of man he means moral and intellectual degradations. At times people talk of the absence of spiritual freedom in Soviet Russia and the eastern democracies. They have in mind, then, the absence of freedom of speech and communication. Some exponents of democracy talk of the spiritual superiority of the democratic philosophy and institutions and they have in mind the view that an autonomous exercise of political choice and decision leads to the growth of the personality of man. Spiritual freedom in this sense of intellectual freedom has been ably championed by Milton and John S. Mill. Milton says :

“Give me the liberty to know, to utter, and to argue freely according to conscience, above all liberties... Let (Truth) and falsehood grapple ; who ever knew Truth put to the worse, in a free and open encounter....I fear yet this iron yoke of outward conformity hath left a slavish print upon our necks ; the ghost of a linen decency yet haunts us.”

Milton's championship of intellectual freedom received further reinforcement at the hands of Mill. He formulated the famous distinction between self-regarding and other-regarding actions. He categorically stated that only on the ground of self-protection could mankind, individually or collectively, interfere with the liberty of action of any of their members. According to Mill human civilization has advanced not by conformity but by the actions and formulas of the dissenters. Hence he says that a citizen "cannot rightfully be compelled to do or forbear because it will be better for him to do so, because it will make him happier, because in the opinion of others, to do so would be wise or even right... Mankind are greater gainers by suffering each other to live as seems good to themselves, than compelling each other to live as seems good to the rest." Plato in the *Republic* advocated the rigid censorship of the works of theologians, comedians, tragedians and artists. He wanted the expulsion of Homer and Hesiod. The Christian scholastics were stalwarts of conformity. Islam and John Calvin have been authoritarians. Against the attempts of authoritarian coercion we find that moral and intellectual rebels have stood for the claims of freedom. Spiritual freedom in the sense of toleration of divergent and radically different opinions has been a cardinal tenet of Hinduism. In Rock Edict XII Asoka accepts the creed of toleration or *samanvaya*. Intellectual freedom and political toleration of opponents have been preached and institutionalized in the democratic countries of the West. In this sense we can say that democracy has advanced the cause of spiritual freedom. Democracy is based on the devices of argumentation, negotiation, compromise and settlement. It does not believe in a final decisive voice of an all-powerful leader imbued with extraordinary vision. If any person assumes unusual importance and power on the political scene he is a danger to democracy. He may respect the forms but cleverly destroys the spirit of democracy. Democracy does not primarily mean good government but aims to provide the institutional mechanism for self-government by the masses. But how can the majority of people or their representatives arrive at a political decision through conflict of contrary opinions if there is behind everything else

the voice of the all-powerful popular hero ? I want to warn my countrymen that they should not be confused about the implications of democratic freedom. Democracy is not the same thing as the philosopher-ruled's guardianship. Democracy is a governmental force that recognizes man's weaknesses. All the forces that corrupt democracy have to be rigorously excluded. I recognize that there are vital flaws in the workings of democracy but at least it provides the institutional framework which maintains the formal conditions of intellectual freedom. Intellectuals should guard this precious legacy. It is no use preaching the end of democracy and its replacement by Caesarism as Spengler does. Intellectual freedom is an integral factor in spiritual freedom and democracy is based on an integral faith in this intellectual freedom.

We have differentiated six meanings of spiritual freedom : (i) freedom as transcendental consciousness against the cosmic force of Maya and negativity ; (ii) spiritual freedom as the attainment of cosmic consciousness in place of egoistic satisfactions ; (iii) spiritual freedom as the de-materialization and isolation of the spiritual Purusha ; (iv) the German idealistic concept of freedom as cognition of necessity, and its materialistic interpretation by Marx ; (v) spiritual freedom as a moral control of appetites and passions ; and (vi) spiritual freedom as intellectual freedom. I accept in full the fifth and the sixth forms. I also generally agree with the Hegelian-Marxian interpretation of freedom as the transition from necessity brought about by cognition. The first, second and the third meanings of spiritual freedom inspire me but being an intellectual with no supra-sensual vision, I find it difficult to accept these conceptions. Tagore and Aurobindo hold that if a man obtains spiritual freedom, political and social freedom will be added to him. Tilak upheld the opposite view. According to Tilak a man who had not realized political freedom in this world could not enjoy spiritual freedom beyond. For creating a more perfect individual and social living it is evident that we need a harmonious synthesis of both inner spiritual and external political, economic and social freedom.

Freedom is the great issue of world-politics today. It has also been the supreme gospel of world ethics and philosophy.

In whatsoever sphere it may be, freedom, if realized, conduces to the growth and extension of a man's personality and enables him to realize his autonomy and individuality against alien cosmic and social forces. Spiritual freedom should not be interpreted as an exclusive mystic or religious consciousness. Spirit is the organic synthetic totality of man's being—physical, vital, moral and intellectual or perhaps even transcendental. Hence spiritual freedom has to be realized as a comprehensive imperative. A comprehensive philosophy of education has necessarily to bear in mind this great concept of spiritual freedom.

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